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POLAND FROM INSIDE

Part II

Social and Economic Problems

Cultural Scene

Totalitarian Reality and Non-Totalitarian Perspective

Poland's Western Heritage and Dissidents' International Solidarity

The Happiest Barracks in the Camp

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Poland from Inside: Part II

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Comparative Studies in Society and History is a forum for the presentation and discussion of new research into problems of change and stability that recur in human societies through time or in the contemporary world. It sets up a working alliance between specialists in all branches of the social sciences and humanities. Debate and review articles bring the general reader in touch with current findings and issues. Book reviews are also published.

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Preface

THE 60th anniversary of the creation of the Republic of Poland came in 1978. The state formed in the aftermath of the First World War marked restored sovereignty for a nation which had lost its independence at the end of the eighteenth century and which for more than a hundred years had been partitioned between Austria, Prussia and Russia.

In 1939 the sovereignty of the nation was again lost when Germany (and soon after the Soviet Union) invaded Poland, thereby provoking the Second World War. A Polish government in exile was rapidly formed, initially based on Paris, then after the fall of France in London. Under General Sikorski, Polish troops fought alongside the French and the British. Within Nazi-occupied Poland, a formidable resistance movement developed, organized in the so-called "Home Army," which took its orders from the government in exile.

In 1943 Stalin severed diplomatic relations with the London-based Sikorski government over its insistence that an investigation be made into the Katyn graves. As the Soviet army pushed the German troops back through eastern Poland, Stalin, was able to promote the pro-communist Polish Workers' Party, formed in 1942, Wladyslaw Gomulka being one of its leaders. In 1944 the "Lublin Government" was recognized by the USSR as the official Polish government. The failure of the Soviet army to advance to the assistance of the Home Army during the Warsaw uprising in August 1944 marked the defeat of anti-communist forces within Poland. At the Teheran (December 1943) and Yalta (February 1945) conferences, Churchill and Roosevelt accepted that Poland should become part of the Soviet sphere of influence and later on agreed that post-war arrangements should be based on the Lublin government. But they still insisted that members of the government in exile should be represented. Sikorski's successor, Mikolajczyk, was allowed to return to Poland, but after the elections of 1947 he was obliged to flee the country.

In 1948 a forced merger of the Polish Socialist Party and the Polish Workers' Party resulted in the formation of the Polish United Workers' Party and it is this party which still holds power in the Polish People's Republic. Today, however, the scene in Poland is very different from what the PUWP believed the outcome of its policies would be. The successive communist administrations of Bierut, Gomulka and Gierek have proved unable to make themselves acceptable to the people, as the workers' riots and the general unrest in Poznan and Warsaw in 1956, in Gdynia and Gdansk in 1970, in Radom in 1976, and in Lublin in 1980 have clearly indicated.

In many respects Poland is a unique case among communist countries. It has been fairly accessible to foreign journalists and its internal

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developments have often been reported in the Western press. If we have decided to devote two special issues of Survey (Nos 109 and 110) to Poland it is for three reasons:

1. In the recent period it has not received a comprehensive in-depth analysis in the West.

2. The unofficial writings of the opposition are practically unknown in the West although they are more extensive and sophisticated than other samizdat *publications. They certainly contain material for a better understanding of the nature of relations between the totalitarian state and society. They convey a wealth of analytical detail based on an experience of totalitarianism at first hand which is lacking in even the most well-informed Western commentaries.*

3. The activities of the Polish opposition may have universal significance in providing a new lesson in the struggle against totalitarianism.

These struggles have of course their ups and downs. Recently, particularly since the Eighth Party Congress (February 1980), repressions against the democratic movement have increased. Yet they are still limited and the opposition remains unbowed.

All documentary material and most of the individual contributions to these two special issues of Survey *come from Poland. Some of them have appeared in* samizdat *publications, others were specially written for* Survey, *some have the name of the author, others only his pen-name.*

L. L.

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Report on the State of the Republic*

THE text which follows is a summary of the results of an opinion survey on the state of the Republic and on the ways in which it might be improved. The survey covered a range of problems which were brought up by the first plenary meeting of the study group "Experience and the Future" and which are to be the themes of future conferences and debates.

The study group was set up in November 1978 at the suggestion of various sections of the community which felt that it was vitally necessary to engage in a more systematic exchange of views on the critical issues facing Poland today. It is composed of a core group of authoritative individuals representing various professions, specialities, academic disciplines and philosophical outlooks, over 100 persons in all, including both party members and Catholic activists and also specialists from various fields, many of whom do not usually participate at all in the country's social and political life. The group has no political ambitions. The guiding purpose behind its meetings is to foster a climate of free and objective debate, the lack of which is a painfully evident feature of our public life.

Both the establishment of the group "Experience and the Future" and the idea for conducting the survey itself arose out of the conviction that the crisis which our country is experiencing is having an impact on a number of key areas affecting us all and is thus giving rise to a situation that is extremely alarming and one which is gradually, and inexorably, getting worse.

More or less clearly aware of the dimensions of this crisis and having had their hopes and expectations thwarted on so many occasions, the Polish people hold the bitter conviction that radical change in the way the sociopolitical system functions is absolutely necessary and at the same time utterly impossible.

HOW and why has Poland's present social, political and economic situation come about? To answer this question we have to find out why, in spite of valid plans that were drawn up for a major acceleration in the country's rate of economic growth, in spite of the numerous, tangible gains that were made at the beginning of the 1970s, in spite of the public's support for the reform programme, in spite of the advantageous boom in international business activity at the start of the 1970s, the availability of large credits, and so on and so forth, a severe crisis developed which engulfed social, political and economic life.

*An abridged version of a 200-page long study.

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In the economic sphere, for example, it turns out that after 1956, as during the period after 1970, there was an improvement in living standards, a boom in the business of producing dramatic plans and an upsurge in activity generally, but that in each case all of this was confined to the first few years.

As far as social policy, in the broad sense of the term, and public administration are concerned, the scenario of change is all but identical. In both cases we find that during the first two or three years there was a policy of general liberalization, a relatively open cultural policy, an improvement in the flow of information, a certain curtailment of censorship powers, and an increase in the participation of non-party members in public life. In both cases there followed a very rapid retreat from this policy of general liberalization, the cutting off of the flow of information, and a tendency also emerged towards the concentration of political power in the hands of an increasingly narrow group.

It is our judgment that the lessons to be learned from these comparisons, the surprising repetitiveness of these cyclical breakdowns in the economic sphere and in the domestic policy sphere, notwithstanding the entirely different conditions, plans and outlooks of both periods (regardless of the unavoidable simplifications implicit in our analysis), bear out, in a manner that is difficult to question, the truth of the proposition that the situation in which Poland now finds itself is attributable to factors which are inherent in the system. These factors have nothing to do with economics, rather they are a feature of that realm of issues which might be described as the techniques of the conduct of political action and the exercise of political power.

SPEAKING in the most general terms, this diagnosis boils down to the conclusion that during the entire post-war period Poland did not develop any universally accepted or truly workable rules and norms to govern its social life.

No agreement was reached even on issues of a most general nature, e.g. on the conceptual principles relating to the exercise of political power, on the rules governing the distribution of the national income or with respect to making an assessment of the consequences of Poland's geopolitical position, nor even in more specific problem areas, e.g. with regard to attitudes towards the nation's cultural heritage, towards the nation's own history, towards property ownership, the legal system, labour, consumption patterns, and so on.

This is emphatically borne out by sociological studies from which it emerges that today's average Pole does not consider the nation to be synonymous with the state. After family and friends, the nation, its history and present situation, is what is most important to today's Pole. The nation is a federation of families. Everything which separates family and nation, including institutions (political organiza-

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tions, trade unions, the civil service, and so on), inspires no sense of personal identification. This is the world of " them."

One of the survey respondents (no. 19) pointed out the paradoxical fact that the process of internal diversification and the weakening or outright disappearance of ideological motivations not only has done nothing to lower the barriers which separate the party from the rest of society, but, quite to the contrary, has reinforced these barriers. This is of course only an apparent paradox. For keeping pace with the demise of ideological rationales the guiding rationale of party life has turned out to be power itself and its attendant fringe benefits. Internal party conflicts have become more acrimonious, something which at all events is probably a characteristic trait of all single-party systems, especially when no machinery exists for the delegation of authority. But in a situation where the existence of rival groups within the party is something to be kept hidden, the activities of these groups inevitably begin to resemble the activities of cliques, while the legitimate work that needs to be done in the economic, cultural, social and other fields recedes into the background under the pressure of the basic criterion of the desirability of strengthening the relative positions of individual rival groups within the party. Under such circumstances these rival groups show no interest in lowering the barriers that separate the party from the rest of society. As a result, as most of the survey respondents believe, society is no longer controllable, and the central leadership, faced with limited freedom of action, has in fact been deprived of effective means for the exercise of political power.

THESE circumstances give dramatic significance to the fact that both a majority of the persons surveyed and the findings of sociological studies assign top priority to the problem of the deepening crisis in the realm of law and order.

The nationwide studies conducted by Borucka and Aretowa on the Polish people's awareness of the law are especially significant. The findings of these studies tell us that barely 73·5 per cent of the population believes that all people receive equal treatment under the laws of the land.

And, perhaps what is most important, these studies revealed that our society harbours a deep-rooted and stereotyped image of the relationship that exists between privileged classes and the law. One of the survey respondents described the situation in the following way: " It is hard to avoid getting the impression that in many cases the law in our country has started to fulfil a quasi-class role, that is, it protects privileges and inequality, it is an instrument that serves to lay down the law for groups and individuals, the kind of law whose object is absolute and uncontrolled power exercised for the sake of promoting selfish advantages."

The governmental authorities do not feel that they are obliged to

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abide by the laws which they themselves have established, and that this attitude towards the law has spread throughout the governmental apparatus, as a result of which the practice of twisting or breaking the law has also become an inherent feature of local politics at the lowest levels, thereby leading to the massive undermining of all trust in government. The legislative process is plagued by an enormous amount of confusion and arbitrariness. The standards that are employed to define what the law is and what it is not have become muddled.

THE situation that prevails in the realm of law and order has had an especially severe impact on the moral attitudes of our society. This is a recurring theme in most of the responses to the questions posed by this survey. The respondents make frequent reference to the damage that has been done which is difficult to redress and to the wide-ranging erosion of moral standards. They go on to point out that society has developed a fixed and dangerous view to the effect that in all areas and in manifold ways legal and moral principles can be evaded and violated. Further, that the feasibility of engaging in these kinds of practices is determined by one's participation in the exercise of political power or by " access to political power "—or, to put it more bluntly, by the degree to which one can bribe the powers that be. This implication is typified in the research work carried out by A. Tymowski, from which one can get an idea as to how universal is the conviction that lawbreaking and the violation of moral standards is a mass phenomenon. Tymowski's research reveals that to an ever increasing extent immoral or even outright criminal behaviour is ceasing to be regarded as a kind of behaviour which deserves to be censured:

> Thirty-four years ago the Polish people were declared to be the collective owners of the banks, factories, railroads, state farms and all other state property. But they are property-owners who have no one to turn to in order to inquire about the condition of their own assets and holdings, nor are they empowered to demand that the government should give an account of its stewardship. The Polish people are property owners who do not know and do not have the right to know the state of their accounts.
>
> Rumour has it that around the beginning of this year representatives of a Western banking consortium paid a visit to Warsaw in order to discuss terms for the financing of the conversion of the Polish national debt. In connexion with this occasion one was able to read reports in certain Western papers, information that was allegedly furnished by the Polish government, about the size of this debt (which was stated only in convertible foreign currencies that could be translated into dollar figures). Meanwhile, no information about the Polish debt was ever made public in Poland. So if this information is correct, one could draw up a new definition of what constitutes a state secret, i.e., " the state secret classification covers that category of information about the state of our

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country which the whole world is entitled to know about, with the sole exception of the Polish people themselves."

This system has produced something more than just apathy and a dangerous kind of cynicism, something which it certainly was not intended to produce. Namely, it has produced a condition of collective informational psychosis. People start wondering about how a couple of fires got started within a single week in a capital city with half a million inhabitants. They conclude that an arsonist must be on the prowl and that this is a symptom of an ongoing power struggle! How do we react to the posters that are put up all over the place every year, announcing the order on the drafting of new recruits for the army? We say that a general mobilization is under way and that they are going to send our boys to Vietnam! What about the explosion in the General Savings Bank Rotunda? It was obviously a time bomb, TNT, sabotage, a deliberate attempt to foment unrest.

It is not the explosion in the Rotunda, but rather the public reaction to this explosion that ought to serve as a warning to our governmental authorities. People who have been kept uninformed or misinformed for decades about the critical issues facing our country, people who see only the results of actions taken by their leaders (all one has to do today is walk into a store to witness the results of these actions), but who know nothing about the motives and impulses behind these actions, react to every piece of news with the reflex comment "they can't fool us!" If no one can find out how many people were killed in Poland in snow avalanches (even though it is known how many people died this way in the Federal Republic of Germany), then why should anyone believe that 49 people were killed in the PKO bombing and not three times that number?

As long as the real machinery that is used to run the political system remains hidden, people are going to interpret every political event by continuing to look for this machinery in the form of the machinations of invisible hands. Poles no longer believe in coincidences and, it would seem, they also no longer believe in the possibility of spontaneous actions, that is, social action undertaken by anyone in response to his own genuine convictions. Behind everything that anybody says or does we try to discern the lurking presence of some spectral being who is manipulating things, instigating things, passing out rubles or dollars, issuing orders and pulling strings. "They can't fool us!"

We are talking here about matters that are closely related to the way in which propaganda is disseminated in our country. For the activities of this country's propaganda machine are guided first and foremost by the principle of the secrecy of public affairs, and it goes to almost absurd lengths in putting this principle into practice. Not only does it try to keep things secret, but it also deliberately spreads disinformation. It fashions an image of the world without caring in the least

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about how this image squares with reality. It propagates a mythology of success in situations of severe crisis. It talks about enthusiasm, while apathy is all pervasive.

LET us now quote from the statement made by one of the survey respondents (no. 39) concerning the consequences of this situation:

> The choice of this and some other interpretation of the meaning of the slogan "the leading role of the party" and the refusal to look for ways in which to permit broad cross-sections of society to participate in the exercise of political power on a cooperative basis is tantamount to the forfeiture of true leadership that is legitimized by broad public support.
>
> The price of our lack of an established legal order has had to be paid in the form of the serious demoralization of a large segment of society, an explosion of corruption, and the impossibility of using the law as a means of mediating in social conflicts and running the economy. Our leaders have decided to pay this price.
>
> All of this poses the threat of serious social conflicts and even unrestrained outbreaks of social unrest. It has been agreed that this price too should be paid.
>
> The denial of the need for clearly defined rules of procedure in the process of making economic decisions and the steps taken to prevent society from overseeing the implementation of these decisions have brought about a paradoxical situation. Namely, covert pressure groups (at the regional or ministerial levels) are able to extort decisions that favour their own interests without having to bear any responsibility for the damage, regardless of its extent, which these decisions inflict on society.

The survey respondents indicated that, due to the lack of institutional machinery for the mediation of serious social conflicts, these conflicts often culminate in uncontrolled explosions and discontent.

It was pointed out that in all areas of life there has been an upsurge in sham activities, which one of the survey respondents described in the following terms (no. 32):

> So we are faced with sham planning and the sham implementation of plans, and even the overstepping of plan guidelines, sham accomplishments in industry, science, the arts and education, the sham declaration and fulfilment of pledges, sham debates, sham voting and elections, sham concern for social welfare and the appearances of government, sham socialism and social work, sham freedom of choice, sham morality, modernity and progress, the opening of ostensibly completed factories and social facilities with great pomp and circumstance, the sham struggle against wrongdoing and the sham contentment of all citizens, sham freedom of conviction, and sham justice. The playing of this game of appearances for appearances' sake has become so widespread that no one —not even the highest levels of government—can distinguish any longer between what is real and what is unreal.

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THE generally accepted view is that we are faced with an all-powerful group of individuals who govern through the party, but respondent no. 41 describes them as a " group which only thinks that it is running the government."

Respondent no. 34 writes:

> In the real social and economic world there is no such thing as a " central planner ". . . . What we are dealing with instead is a heterogeneous amalgamation of central institutions which employ a wide range of different standards in arriving at their decisions. . . . We know very little about how the centre does its work or about the way in which it drafts and adopts strategic economic decisions. What knowledge we do possess is based on the outward and more ceremonial forms of the functions performed by various central institutions and, of course, on the results of these actions. But we still do not know where the initiatives come from that give rise to strategic planning decisions, what kind of role is played in this process by individual components of the central government, what is the scope of the rights and responsibilities of these components in the shaping of these decisions, whether decisions are made after the analysis and rejection of alternative solutions, whether only one draft of a proposed decision is submitted for consideration, who is in charge of verifying the internal consistency of this draft, whether anyone is aware of the inevitable strains that a given decision may produce, who decided and on what grounds that it would be a good idea to subject the economy to these strains, through what channels and after how much lost time does information reach the centre that alerts it to growing disproportions in the development of the economy, why it takes this much as opposed to some other length of time before the centre makes a decision to revise the plan, to what extent revised decisions succeed in clearing up the problems inherent in original decisions, and so on and so forth. Not only the average citizen, but also many professional economists and economic policy-makers are unable to come up with any answers to these questions.
>
> There are two conclusions to be drawn from all this. First, not only when viewed from outside, but also from inside the central government, there is a noticeable lack of a clear delineation of rights, duties and responsibilities among its individual constituent components. Second, shortcomings are officially brought out into the open only under the pressure of conflicts between the government and society. And almost immediately after the danger of conflicts has been averted this entire problem is shoved into the background. This in turn indicates that the centre is unwilling or unable to regulate its own internal relations properly. It is probably a question of both the former and the latter.
>
> This unwillingness to alter the *status quo* is hard to understand. In any event the standardized delineation of spheres of official jurisdiction would lead either to the partial curtailment of the power of those components which are most powerful or to the formal exemption from responsibility of those other components

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which are not as powerful, something which also would not be to the liking of the leading components. Thus we come to the second characteristic feature of the centre, i.e., its hierarchical organization.

This is not an ordinary kind of hierarchical arrangement. Its uniqueness is based on the fact that the *de facto* balance of power between superior and inferior authority deviates in a serious way from the formal arrangements provided for by law.

THE representative bodies in our country serve no useful purpose whatever; they represent no one, nor do they even perform the function of overseeing the activities of executive agencies.

Respondent no. 36 points out that: "The manipulation of the Seym and of all the other representative bodies is a practice which displays a fundamental disregard for all of the imponderables that are so important in Poland. . . . Nor do its official prerogatives leave any room for harbouring any illusions about the subsidiary role to which it has been assigned."

The range of duties that the law enforcement apparatus is forced to carry out in the economic realm, a workload which has been enlarged to an excessive degree due to the chaos of the legal system, has increased the manpower strength of this apparatus to the point where it is more in keeping with that of a police state.

The crisis in the system of economic management is something that is patently obvious to all of the survey respondents (without exception). Respondent no. 16: "At every step along the way the press publishes reports about various absurdities which could be easily cleared up, and yet in the end nothing changes."

"Literally every element of our system of management is in a sickly state," writes respondent no. 36. "Planning no longer deserves to be called planning, coordination is impossible, and it is completely illusory to believe that it is possible to oversee the fulfilment of plans."

The only remedies that the management system can come up with for the economy's inefficiencies are those which have no effect on the system itself (the principle of the "innocence of the system," as respondent no. 37 put it). The chaos that exists in the planning of economic development has reached scandalous proportions. However, "the concealment and distortion of information is a built-in feature of the system," as the same respondent points out.

> The system does not reward, but, quite the reverse, penalizes people for revealing the truth. The free flow of information is blocked by all of the active forces and by all of the mechanisms of our economy. The central authorities believe that they have a monopoly over all information, while in fact they have a monopoly hold only over that information which the information source has an interest in passing on. Nobody knows how much we really have of anything in this country—be it machine tools, hectares

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under cultivation, construction machinery in working order, unused factory floorspace, coal that has actually been taken out of the ground, or newsprint press machines; there are no complete records of licence purchases (not to mention studies of the cost-effectiveness of such purchases), nor is there any such thing as the simplest promotional catalogue providing information about who could produce what in case a firm order were placed with this or that factory; nor does anyone even know who exactly produces what, since attempts to publish this kind of information brochure have turned out to be contrary to the interests of some of our manufacturers.

All of these things combined have gradually deprived the mass media of their powers of persuasion. The result of the public's perception of the unreliability of the mass media, a perception that is in fact based on its reaction to the media's reporting of political events, is that in the public's view even factual information appears to be less than factual, since no one believes in people who do not deserve to be trusted or in communications media that do not deserve to be trusted. Moreover, the people that control the mass communications media in Poland cannot fathom how it could be that their monopoly of information is subject to any constraints at all. The foreign communications media and the upsurge in publishing activity beyond the pale of the censorship office are sapping the strength of this illusory monopoly; and other forms of public information sharing are now taking shape that are based on person-to-person contacts. All in all, then, it can be said that this cog in the system of political power is suffering from the same complaints as all the other cogs, i.e. from inefficiency, ineffectiveness, spuriousness, and the incapacity for self-adjustment.

THE period of the last 10 years has turned out to be a period of growing social stratification within the body of the Polish nation. The 1970s were a decade marked by a rapid growth of incomes, but these incomes grew fastest in the upper-income strata of our society, a fact which led to the emergence of a wage gap ratio of 1: 20; this fact diminishes the worth of the very strong trump card which our political system holds *vis-à-vis* capitalist societies—egalitarianism.

Society's perception of this situation is just as much a real fact as the fact of the existence of social classes. The tendency that sometimes occurs to analyse only the objective reality while at the same time ignoring how people perceive this reality is totally unreasonable and erroneous. The feasibility of active participation in social life is an important need in its own right. When no provisions are made to meet this need the individual personality is mutilated and the individual feels that he is nothing more than a tool for the realization of rash goals.

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The author of response no. 7 makes the following point: "I would say that the greatest internal threat to our society consists in the weakening of the social fabric, in the declining sense of individual responsibility for the fate of the whole, and in the diminished sense of social solidarity in everyday life."

In addressing the theme of social atomization the author of response no. 1 writes: "The fact that people identify first and foremost with the smallest and largest of our society's basic groups, that is, with the family and with the nation, attests to the persistence of a shocking vacuum in the realm of intermediate social bonds. Such a society is incapable of exerting a strong enough pressure in defence of its claims or in order to obviate bad decisions." Another survey respondent states that "when viewed in terms of those things with which people can identify personally and to which they are emotionally committed, a kind of sociological vacuum exists between the primary social-group level (family, friends) and the national-community level," and the same respondent goes on to observe that, "formal institutions are often deemed to be unsympathetic, malevolent, unfair and sometimes downright threatening."

Under conditions marked by the atmosphere of secrecy that surrounds the conduct of public affairs and in the midst of the crisis situation which has engulfed various spheres of our collective life in recent years we have witnessed the emergence of groups that are seeking to speak up for these interests and needs. Some of these groups have set themselves the goal of providing for the social and legal protection of the interests of workers and peasants, while some are working for the break-up of monopoly control over news and information held by the mass communications media which twists and distorts it, some for the dissemination of knowledge and, finally, some for the publication of works whose circulation is prohibited for reasons that often have nothing to do with their contents, but rather with the identity of the author. Some of these groups and circles define themselves as members of an opposition movement, while other groups are so labelled by the official propaganda media. Most important from a social standpoint is the finding that these groups emerged at a time when the symptoms of social crisis were growing worse and at a time when society was becoming more and more acutely aware of the fact that nothing was being done to meet their manifold needs with regard to justice, information, culture and the arts.

The reflections of both scholars and laymen refer to the widening of the gaps that separate one social group from another and to the exacerbation of social inequalities. The problem was defined very bluntly by respondent no. 3, who wrote:

> The problem is one of injustice and inequality. This is how everyone feels nowadays. There are hospitals that have no cotton for bandages and in which members of our families are dying in the

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> hallways. But then there are hospitals with isolation wards and intensive care facilities in every room. We pay fines for crossing the solid line, but there are people that get away with killing someone while driving under the influence. There are better stores and better vacation houses; there are enormous fenced-off grounds which are off-limits to ordinary people. People see all this and they know what it is all about. Everyone can plainly see that high-ranking civil servants and officials ride around in luxury cars, even though there are familiar stories about prime ministers who take the tram to get around. People cannot excuse the injustices which are committed by everyone in Poland these days who has any connexion at all with the government. . . . This is not a question of money, but rather of the existence of a whole range of informal benefits available to those with access to political power and influence.

In the public mind there is an almost universally shared belief that people who are obedient are most likely to have an unobstructed chance of winning promotion and pursuing successful careers. At the very start of their careers a kind of negative selection process takes place.

"Group conflicts of interest are indeed a major topic of debate," says respondent no. 10. The same respondent goes on to note:

> What all of this boils down to is that it is high time that the problem of special interests should be taken into account in analyses of socialist society, that the abolition of the private ownership of the means of production is by no means tantamount to the elimination of group conflicts of interest, and that in Poland there is a relatively large group of people who have a lot to lose and who are ready to do whatever is necessary in order to avoid the loss of their special privileges. An important factor contributing to the stagnation of our social life is the fact that all forms of political activity have in fact been monopolized by an economically privileged group.

Others are of the opinion that this diagnosis misses the point: "The tables have been turned. There are economic benefits to be derived from sharing in the exercise of political power; government pensions have been rendered sacrosanct."

To the public's way of thinking, what this amounts to above all is not only the classification of people into party members and nonparty members, but also into rich and poor or people with solid connexions and people with no connexions. This problem was succinctly defined by respondent no. 15, who writes that the elite "seeks not only to preserve its numerous and almost feudal privileges for the rest of its own life, but also—again in keeping with the rules of the feudal order—to pass on these privileges to its heirs and descendants."

Many of the respondents point to the spread of elitism in education and call attention to the fact that different social classes and groups

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have varying degrees of access to educational opportunities—in spite of the system's avowed dedication to the principle of equal educational opportunity. Among other things, it is said that the tendency to give up all hope for the fulfilment of personal ambitions " is turning society into a body consisting of two unequal parts, i.e. a narrow elite that has access to educational opportunities and the majority of the population that has been cut off from all opportunities for personal growth."

WHAT we are dealing with here is not merely the closing off of all channels for the transmission of genuine public opinion, but rather, and more importantly, the manipulation of this public opinion. Monopoly control over all sources of information, be it misinformation or superficial information, over the selective interpretation of facts and over the means of indoctrination clears the way for all kinds of manipulations, the effects of which we know very little about. Many of the survey respondents call attention to the manifold effects of the practice of distorting public opinion. But we should say right here that this is not merely a question of the refusal to inform the public about everything it needs to know. " The total secrecy surrounding events in the public domain," as one of the respondents puts it, is just one side of the coin. The other side of the coin is the inculcation of false consciousness and the manipulation of public opinion, a practice which often fosters antagonistic relations between individual social groups. " The free expression of public opinion," writes the author of response no. 8, " is deliberately prohibited by the distorted reporting of news and information by the mass communications media. As a result, public opinion is shaped to a large extent by the reporting of half-truths, something which contributes to the formulation of irrational attitudes."

At this point let us return once more to those statements which are concerned with various issues, but which at the same time share a certain common theme. What we are talking about here are certain states of consciousness and certain attitudes displayed by the Polish people which seem to be inherently contradictory. What kinds of states of consciousness and what kinds of attitudes are we in fact talking about? Namely, their disapproval of the *status quo* coupled with a simultaneous sense of the impossibility of changing the *status quo*. Privately they say one thing and publicly another, and only some of them are remotely aware of their schizophrenic behaviour. Many of these people are outwardly practising believers, but this faith of theirs is often divorced from their concept of public and private morality. They personalize their goals in life not in the sense that is otherwise human and laudable, but rather in the sense that their personal goals run counter to the goals of other people. For in acknowledging the impossibility of taking action that is genuinely in the public

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interest they feel that they have absolved themselves of all responsibility for their own indifference and apathy and sometimes even for their asocial behaviour. It is for this reason that we are witnessing manifestations of social inertia, frequent feelings of frustration, mutual hostility, and an upsurge in socially pathological behaviour.

The author of response no. 1 writes, *inter alia*: "The gap between one's critical attitude towards the reality in which one lives and the vital necessity of constantly adapting to the mandatory mechanisms and rules of the game is a source of frustration. This kind of schizophrenia twists the moral and civic consciousness of society, and in this area too we are faced with a sort of accumulation of negative symptoms."

"People drink and they steal," writes respondent no. 9:

> People give and take bribes. They make deals. They make a joke out of everything. Any topic will do. This is all dreadful and depressing. But I am convinced that we alone are not to blame for the way we are. For one has to take into account the fact that when you get right down to it society approves and accepts all of these objectionable character traits, since it would otherwise be impossible for these behavioural characteristics to become as all-pervasive as they have. How low have we sunk if to lead a normal and honest life no longer seems to be the right thing to do, if to do so is seen to be a sign of weakness?

Favouritism, nepotism, corruption, the violation of the basic rules of community life, alcoholism—these are only a few of the many afflictions that plague our lives. There are a number of factors which contribute to the plague of alcoholism. One of these factors, but by no means the only one, is the obstruction of all possibilities for the satisfaction of social needs.

THE development of any society can never take place in the absence of stresses and difficulties. But the present situation is more complex and difficult than ever before. We are being threatened both by the further weakening of the strength and sovereignty of our nation state and by the obstructions and major problems which stand in the way of our economic development. We are being threatened by our growing economic dependency on other countries and by the further deterioration in our living standards; and in this connexion we are also threatened by increasingly more acute domestic conflicts, by the weakness and ineffectiveness of our national government, and by conflicts arising out of the inequality of incomes and exploitative practices. We are also threatened by a drastic decline in our national birth rate, a deterioration in the state of public health, the further downgrading of our level of culture and education, and, above all, by the deepening crisis in our moral and political life, together with all of the things that attend such a crisis, i.e. the absence of a climate of trust,

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declining efficiency, and the disappearance of public initiative, and the diminished overall hardiness of our society. In talking about the lack of effective institutional machinery which would be capable of protecting society against these dangers, what we mean to say is that no one is encouraging society to take effective countermeasures and that no deliberate and organized effort is being made to prepare society for the challenges which await it. No adequate effort is being made to build or rebuild the kinds of social institutions and mechanisms which are essential if we are to be able to stand up to these challenges.

The dangers that confront us directly consist in the possibility of a further worsening of the economic crisis as a result of the mismanagement of this crisis situation and in the prospect of increasing difficulties with our balance of payments and a further decline in our net material product. The decline in the standard of living that is expected to take place over the next two or three years may exceed all limits of the public's powers of psychological resistance. If necessary, the government will make incidental political and economic concessions to various social groups, sometimes even paying a very high price for these concessions (usually by tapping the national treasury). Paying factory workers to compensate them for the shutdowns of their plants is an example of such a concession. But another example is the granting of permission to build churches or for the Pope's visit. The toleration of opposition groups and periodicals is also an example of such a tactical concession.

ANY plan for the resolution of the crisis which is based strictly on the use of economic means is now unrealistic, since the underlying causes of the crisis are not economic. Unless the system of management is reformed and unless the general climate of social life is altered it is inconceivable that any way will be found to harness any untapped resources in the economic realm.

Even in the case of an alternative scenario which makes allowances for the scoring of occasional successes by the "survival tactics" policy, the threat of an outbreak of civil unrest has not been eliminated, rather it has merely been postponed, while tensions continue to build up all the while. The social consciousness is crystallizing, and it is being pushed in the direction of open revolt by unavoidable lines of reasoning. This process is described by the author of response no. 9.

> It is becoming more and more noticeable that people are asking themselves more serious questions and that the reasons for their frustration are more deepseated. Why is it that the work I do is worth so little? Why is it that, when I am forced to give my consent to something, I never know what it is that I am agreeing to? Why is it that I am unable to express any of my serious doubts and reservations in any open forum, and why is it that I have to be afraid to do so? Why is it that in order to be promoted to a higher-ranking position and in order to make a better life for my

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> family I often have to act in a way that violates my own conscience? Why is it and how did it actually come to pass that I have turned out to be such a scoundrel? When, at what particular point in time did I realize this and since when did I decide that I couldn't care less?

According to the respondents to our survey, the sad state of society's moral consciousness, a diagnosis which they all agree on (a diagnosis which is frequently confirmed as well by journalists writing for the mass media), is attributable first and foremost to the public's awareness of the enormous waste of the nation's resources, primarily in the form of society's vitality, goodwill and talents. For it is hard to convince people that they should do their jobs well and care for public property as their personal property when all around them they can see how great amounts of our natural resources are being wasted due to mismanagement and ill-conceived decisions, how corruption is spreading and how the people responsible for this are being protected. Respondent no. 20 writes:

> The government has disabused the public of the habit of voicing any criticism directed against higher authorities and displaying any genuine initiative. By setting itself up as the sole and undisputed source of all decisionmaking power the government has instilled a conditioned reflex in the people which compels them to wait for instructions from above before doing anything. This attitude towards the government as the sole repository of all power ties in perfectly with the critical, to put it mildly, appraisal of its performance and with the contempt for its incompetent and frequently dishonest representatives at various levels.

Respondent no. 10 writes:

> It is more and more open to question whether our economic problems can ever be effectively resolved unless steps are also taken to fulfil certain political and social prerequisites which would be based on the rebuilding of at least a minimal sense of trust in the leadership, a belief in the meaningfulness of doing a good job and in the possibility of working for oneself, a sense of balance between work performed and rewards received, and so on.

It may indeed be true that the distressing state of society's moral consciousness, a condition which is reflected by increasingly antagonistic interpersonal relations, dishonesty, indifference towards matters of common concern, and the breakdown of the bonds which hold society together, is the greatest danger facing us.

THE survey respondents believe that the problem of national sovereignty, the prevailing system of international relations and the whole range of exogenous factors have a bearing on our domestic life. Respondent no. 17 writes:

> The Poles are a people for whom national sovereignty is a value

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> of supreme importance. It can of course be said that national sovereignty is an issue of critical importance to all peoples and this is quite true. But not all nations have had the chances we have had to become convinced of how easy it is to lose their national independence and how hard it is to regain it.

However, the survey respondents believe that Polish public opinion is aware of a profound contradiction between the interests of Poland and the whole existing system of international relations, between the interests of external forces and our own national interests. Respondent no. 4 writes: "The results of a reform of the political system cannot be allowed to disrupt the existing balance of power in Europe and it must be expected that the actual scope of such a reform will be limited by external factors." None of the survey respondents questioned the validity of this viewpoint. But in order to achieve a certain minimal degree of internal accord and to create a climate of cooperation and trust it is necessary to acknowledge the existence of certain historical facts which cannot be written off. Respondent no. 17 writes:

> Poland is a country which for a thousand years grew and developed as an adjunct of Latin culture and civilization. Poland's cultural and political traditions are products of European history. All attempts to separate Poland from its historical traditions, all attempts to disrupt the continuity of its history which spans a millenium are doomed to failure. All such attempts have engendered and will continue to engender unrest and resistance which make the peaceful and creative development of our nation and our state impossible.

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" Planning " under Socialism

Stefan Kisielewski

THE word " socialism " continues to be ambiguous and unclear. The East European countries, moulded after the Second World War under the protectorate of the Soviet Union, do not call themselves " communist " or " Marxist." They prefer to describe themselves as " socialist." Today, in countries like Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia or Rumania, the word " communism " is reserved for special, " teleological " Party debates. In common practice, however, state propaganda employs the word " socialism " usually without further clarification. Such practice is of course as useful in internal propaganda as it is in the expanding relations with democratic Western Europe where the term " socialism " is a good citizen of common parlance and offends no one. The extent to which the meaning of this word varies around the world seems to cause little consternation among optimistic Western technocrats, who are unconcerned in their ignorance. Its chameleon-like character poses no obstacle for them. The Western dilettantish attitude towards Eastern Europe springs from a lack of information, but it is also hampered by Western disdain for the experiences of Eastern Europe, which are considered as irrelevant or exotic, and in any case as unrelated to Western interests and problems. (By Eastern Europe I mean here not the USSR, but the huge group of countries which stretches between Russia and East Germany.)

The misunderstanding is one of which both sides can be accused. For not only do Westerners lack knowledge of our countries and their system, but we also are insufficiently versed in Western affairs. A citizen of one of our countries who reads only what appears in our press has no idea that, for instance, Denmark and Sweden consider themselves socialist countries. Even when this is revealed to him, he smiles unbelievingly. For in Eastern Europe social democratic countries do not enjoy the designation " socialist," although for tactical reasons one now generally avoids abusing the social democrats by calling them traitors and servants of the bourgeoisie. Thus a reader of our press is not even aware to what extent this word is used in the West or of the fact that in many " progressive " circles in France, Italy, and Scandinavia, the word is regarded as a symbol of the true future of the world. Meanwhile, the masses, in Poland for instance (who are not in the least delighted by their situation) think that socialism means only the state of affairs currently reigning here in the East.

Socialism is unanimity—this is the syllogism which in our countries children absorb with their mothers' milk. Whoever thinks otherwise is not a socialist: thus claim the press, radio and television in our

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countries from morning till night. And the magic of this only vaguely defined word is compelling and overpowering to such a degree that few people have the audacity to say (even in private—although in any case, there is no opportunity to do so elsewhere) that their opinion differs from the accepted one, that they are not socialist. But more often one will meet disillusioned people who say that although they are socialists, they want a " different " socialism. This provokes the regime mockingly to abuse these zealots of the " otherness " of socialism as revisionists. To many people in the state apparatus, the term " revisionism " has taken on a negative and hostile sense despite its positive etymological significance—for, surely, does the " revision " of something not presuppose a change for the better, an amelioration? This springs from the regrettable fact that those at the head of our state apparatus have, through years of lengthy and constant repetition of the same inanities, of the same propagandistic phrases and epithets devoid of content, and through altering the meaning of words to suit themselves, lost all contact with reality and the true meaning of words and have fallen into a kind of " semantic neurasthenia." It is not my aim to malign the ruling party apparatus or to attribute to it any openly evil intent. These are often people of good will, acting in the belief that they cannot do otherwise for such and none other is the proper and irresistible mechanism of the " socialist system."

A firm faith in the absolute necessity of state monopoly of production is one against which even critics have no defence. The faith in an economic dictatorship of this kind, supposedly leading to a levelling of social standards among all citizens and thus to their common and unanimous socialist opinion in all matters, is partly a result of the fact that our socialism, our communism, came into being at precisely that period in history when the Eastern European countries in which it now reigns were economically backward and ravaged by Hitler. In Poland the nationalization of large and medium-sized industry and the expropriation of its owners was carried out by the Germans during the 1939–45 occupation. It was accompanied by a massacre of the Jewish population, which worked largely in the spheres of trade, crafts and services. Hence there was no alternative when, in the spring of 1945, communism, along with the Red Army, invaded Poland. There was no question of returning these industries to private ownership, especially since all the owners had disappeared from the new, post-German lands.

There followed a final levelling and liquidation of all private industries and organized sections of society in order to obliterate all traces of the previous way of life. The state and Party apparatus proceeded to build a productive apparatus along Soviet lines. Instead of the proletariat creating the revolution, it was rather the revolution, imposed from above in a classless, propertyless void, which proceeded to create an industrial proletariat, building state industry in a

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relatively pure model of state collectivism in Poland for example. The country's entire economy consists of one huge, centrally controlled enterprise. The only exception to date has been agriculture.

WE will concern ourselves with socialism of the Polish, or more generally speaking, Eastern European type—the type, that is, in which both economic and political power has been hierarchically concentrated within the pyramid of the state-Party apparatus. Within this apparatus all private means of production, market value laws, and the free interplay of economic powers have been liquidated. Their place has been taken by centrally controlled plans which govern all spheres of life: production and its aims, the value of currency, prices, wages, social services, education, and so forth. Of course, the necessary condition for the functioning of such a system is a suitable political system. This involves the liquidation of legal pluralism, class differences, independent groups and the free interplay of political powers within the country. Politics is economic and economics political. This means that power is entrusted to the people who justify themselves ideologically with the term "socialism." In such a situation, the economic and political powers inevitably go hand in hand surrounded by the myth of ideologically justified omnipotence and equipped with the right to carry on their Mafia-like activities. Their omnipotence is established regardless of whether they are ideally referred to as "the dictatorship of the proletariat," or insultingly as "the cult of the personality."

Power lies, in theory at least, in the hands of philosophers convinced of their mission. But as philosophers they are pessimistic, aware of the weakness of human nature, a nature formed by themselves through many years of social stratification. This pessimism in turn gives rise to the conviction that a socialist society must be constantly (but for how long?) supervised, since left to itself it will automatically revert to a multi-opinioned, class-differentiated structure. Theoretically we are all equal, for all were deprived of means of individual production and now work for one collective, centralized and anonymous employer. But despite all this it is clear that industrial society in socialist countries, including Russia, still retains a tendency to internal stratification by virtue of the pluralism of functions performed as well as of certain regional differences. It continues to break up in more or less lawful fashion into various "sub-classes," circles and often Party groups which differ materially as well as in respect of access to political decisions. And yet this stratification, tolerated out of necessity, fails to suggest to the ruling philosophers the simple idea that a "classless society" reveals itself to be a doctrinairian utopia, contrary to all practical experience and, what is more, not even as morally attractive as it had seemed on paper. On the contrary, the "philosophers" stubbornly confirm themselves in their

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theory of permanent class struggle, finding it a useful argument for preserving monolithic police totalitarianism.

MARX and his followers have tried for the past century or so to convince us that factories, enterprises and the growing productive apparatus should be entrusted to the people who work in and create them, but who are cut off from their due gains by the class of those who own and exploit them. An attractive theory and at first glance persuasive. But one detail has been neglected: how will all this actually turn out in practice? How are the working people —leaving aside for the moment the ambiguity and unspecified nature of the term "working people"—to manage factories and their personnel? By gathering in front of the factory and debating every detail of production? Or through specially trained (but where and how?) representatives who would hold public debates and arrive at equally public decisions? And if this proves impossible due to technical considerations, are they to gather in private and then to account for their actions to the people? But the question of how often and in what form this account is to be given, whether before or after the decision, whether in highly technical terminology or in the language of the layman, remains far from clear.

Marx did not concern himself with such practical details. The propagator and theoretician of the future, he had neither the time nor the opportunity to do so. It was left to Lenin to begin to grapple with the problem of actually implementing the projects and precepts of socialism.

It was all very well for the theoreticians to say that we must "socialize the means of production," but it did not occur to them to clarify how exactly we were to go about this. The answer became obvious: through those who represent the people, through those who formed a caste of managers of national production, i.e. managers of socialism—a caste growing both in size and complexity. Yet these are not technocrats but officials, among whom the highest ranking, those who really have the power of decision, come from political Party life. That is to say, they come from those who are victorious in the political and personal intrigues which go on behind closed doors within the ruling single Party, veiled from society at large by closed curtains. Clearly, it is not the economic professionals who emerge as victors from these often incredibly complicated and dangerous struggles waged in the shadow of the neighbouring power, but rather people endowed with quite different talents, the glibbest "dialecticians," who have nothing to do with the secrets of production, but nevertheless run all the factories, mines and steelworks in the name of the "working class." They are sham managers, presiding over the omnipresent and ever-growing bureaucratic Party apparatus. And thus centralized and absolutist regimes of dilettantes come into being. Whole classes of professionals are subordinated to their arbi-

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trary decisions. The dilettante, placed in the centre of economic decisions, yet motivated to a large extent by political considerations and shielding himself with ideology, has the power to cause cataclysms through numberless mistakes whose effects may take years to wear off.

He holds in his hand all available means of economic intervention. By eliminating the autonomous market which in capitalist societies is automatically formed by supply and demand or profit and loss, he can dictate prices and wages, plan production, trade and investments. And since there is no competition, individual bankruptcy, which in a market economy gives an indication of the needlessness or "out datedness" of some kinds of production is impossible. The planner, furnished with the power of absolute decision, is deprived of signals, tests and pointers from below. (But these do, of course, duly make their appearance when it is much too late, in the form of general material frustration.) He acts in an artificial vacuum. He must take many things at their face value since economically there is nowhere for technological innovations to be tested. The unconvertible currency which cuts him off from international exchange, often rules out new production techniques, and these in turn do not exactly benefit from the lengthy investment cycle which long beforehand will already have decided the increasing degree to which future production will fall behind.

Realists, on the other hand, and economic experts count for little or nothing in such a system, since they are considered "politically naïve," i.e. dangerous. The complete alienation and elimination in their time of the most outstanding Polish—even Marxist—economists such as Lange, Kalecki, Lipinski, Brus and others casts light on the matter. In capitalism, production decisions are distributed among a number of managers, specialists, entrepreneurs, bankers and technocrats; they are all supplied with indications from the market, all afraid of material responsibility in the form of loss, bankruptcy, dismissal etc., but all with the power of some economic initiative; in socialism, the centralized decision resides in the hands of a small group of people who are deprived of any signals from the market. They risk nothing and are responsible for nothing. The risk of erroneous decisions falls on the shoulders of society—a mistake in an arbitrary and dictatorial economic decision has multiple and irreversible results. The mirage of central planning is transformed into bureaucratic chaos and there is no one to blame for this state of affairs. Their lack of responsibility is based on an ideological factor: they represent the dictatorship of the proletariat, the form of the "rule of the people" after the revolution. The illusion is stubbornly maintained.

HOW, then, in a planned system that allegedly eliminated conflicts of group interests, was it possible for so complicated a bureaucratic machinery to arise, a machinery so full of conflicts and

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contradictions, one managing production and yet, at the same time, cut off from it? These representatives of "the people" who manage factories, production units and centralized trade, these "managers of socialism" who in principle are not, of course, interested in material gain—how did they transform themselves into this closed, tight and internally conflict-ridden oligarchy—an oligarchy which naturally cannot manage to plan *everything*. And why, I ask, is such a group granted only temporary infallibility so that later, if there is a personal-political change in rule, it can, in an equally uncompromising manner, be forced to shoulder responsibility and be punished by a total erasure from life, or even from history? Is it that decentralization, open and universally accessible economic decisions are not possible in socialism, although it professes to be the most democratic state, directly ruled by a people to whom it allegedly belongs?

These are simple questions. The answers are necessarily complex, as is everything else within this system. For it is a system which made all socio-economic problems artificial, robbing them of their natural automatic standards and regulators. In their absence socialism manages in a unique way to combine politics, economics and personal affairs, creating Gordian knots that defy solution by classical Western economists and political scientists. In capitalism, the problem of underproduction does not exist. The main concern is not the question of distributing insufficient goods, but that of finding a way to create markets for excess goods through new means of exploitation, sales and technology, through stimulation of new needs and through competition. Socialism has neither alarms nor safety chutes; no obvious or manifest crises and bankruptcies which disperse or at least reveal tensions; no market stimuli. But what it does have is permanent deficit and a constant state of crisis. The crisis, moreover, since it is not manifested in any statistical form (for state revenue is calculated here exclusively in terms of completed productive activity and the amounts of goods produced, even useless ones) is "merely" distributed on to the shoulders of the entire public—a helpless, befuddled and uncomprehending public. For of course the state *per se* never goes bankrupt.

What is the origin of all this? The reasons need to be more deeply looked into because in our state we have a secret economy based on internal and external misinformation and the juggling of fictitious budgetary figures. In our system, a great burden for socio-economic life is, despite the theories of Marx, Engels and others, the state. Since everything is nationalized, a huge official and bureaucratic stratum has, with time, been formed which embodies and represents the state and which issues in its name an endless number of rules and regulations.

Today this stratum has its own specific interests other than those of production. Its origin should be sought in the phenomenon of revolutionary violence—a phenomenon inseparable from that of

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revolutionary reconstruction. An enormous apparatus of force, control, censorship and propaganda is needed to make people accept the new forms of state control over production, and to accept along with them the winding, lengthy and yet persistent ideological superstructure and its machinations. This apparatus, as it continues to expand, grows more and more complex. For without constant vigilance and coercive force, there is always the possibility of a spontaneous "regression to bourgeois positions." The costs of running the state machine, the machine of force and control, engulf all the social "surplus value." This is the secret of our full employment. The control apparatus, the machine of ideological control and manipulating administrative bureaucracy, is enormous. It employs the many people who are no longer capable of doing any other work. And this, of course, is why we do not have the kind of unemployment from which the capitalist countries suffer. But the difference is that in those countries one works in or for the sake of production, whereas here new kinds of work have been created—work that is unproductive even though there is full employment. Of course the expense involved in all this is enormous. While increasing the amount of currency on the market, the machine fails to increase the mass of goods "for distribution" which that same market has to offer the buyer. Society has to suffer the strain of a constant deficit, a burden which the gigantic costs of the machine that realizes and upholds socialism imposes upon it. This deficit, although written with invisible ink, nevertheless manifests itself every day in the scarcity or even total lack of consumer goods, chronic under-production, low standards of living (in the so-called "collective consumption," that is, of public facilities) and in the inconveniences of day-to-day life which arise from a lack of services. These are neglected and not even accounted for in the national revenue. Confronted with the decline of agriculture, as in all cases of individualized productive output, the state machine also stands helpless.

In practice, the "basic" elements of the state, the economic monopoly dictatorship, tend to mix and blend with elements of the "superstructure," the ideological and political ones. Among these elements censorship and propaganda play a major role, their task being to perpetuate in the social consciousness one unified opinion about everything and to eliminate any differing views. The centre of all public initiative is of course the Party and its apparatus. The Party, as a power factor in politics and propaganda as well as in economics, prevents any economic mechanism from functioning automatically. For the implementing of each decision concerning the functioning of the economy, be it even the most obvious or essential demand of day-to-day life, is a lengthy, difficult process which requires the aid of mysterious, superior political authorities, unknown to the people. Their decisions, when finally revealed, descend abruptly and often

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quite unexpectedly onto the shoulders of society, a thunderbolt from a clear sky. Hence the people's disbelief in the aims and effects of their work, since both can very well be eliminated and rendered ineffectual by sudden decisions from above.

ACCOMPANYING all this is the constant unbearable psychological pressure arising from incessant Party intervention in the functioning of each socio-productive sphere. The Party organization functions regardless of, and above and beyond, the management of production. The authorities promote uncertainty and intrigue in every place of work and inspire acts of denunciation. They cause great wastage in the form of psychological fatigue and general apathy on the part of the working public. And all the while, unknown to the public, this apparatus continues to function from above undeterred, bogged down in its routine and hierarchical entanglements, automatically smothering everything below which is alive. People managing it, uninformed and estranged from the life of society, are often ignorant of the historical phases of its functioning. For every 10 or 15 years, this apparatus undergoes a partial earthquake in the form of a " purge " of personnel from above. And the new people by no means feel responsible for the faults of their predecessors, or are even aware of them.

Hence the general grey mass of citizens is sometimes surprised by unexpected slogans and initiatives which are in drastic contrast to those previously proclaimed. No-one feels put upon to answer for the faults of the past (except perhaps the leader who is weighed down by his dismissal), and no wonder: in no case is there a forum in which the citizen might give vent to any kind of surprise.

The state of affairs described above—the failures in production, the lack of marketable goods and so forth—is also the result of unavoidably bad planning and of the low level of productivity which plagues the whole of Eastern Europe. Productivity is traditionally interpreted here as the individual output accomplished within a given time span, and on this basis all the criteria are calculated on which pay, premiums and any rewards for workers depend. But individual effort, even if forthcoming, still does not decide the general productive *effectiveness* of the entire institution. Both the individual and collective effort of workers can be annulled through organizational errors. These can originate " from above " or may be the result of objective external causes such as inadequate means of transportation to the place of work, irregular or late stock delivery, material waste, tardiness in the preparation of work tools, bureaucratic control, badly qualified workers (although one finds the same workers can function perfectly well abroad, in capitalist systems) who often belong to a first generation of former peasants, and so on.

These are all in a sense not just " subjective " but " objective " causes in that they have their origin in the specific characteristics

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of the system. Our "cooperative" problems, for example, are organically related to the ideologically motivated liquidation of small, individual craftsmen who once supplied the spare precision parts for machines. The helpless bureaucratic "work cooperatives" will never take their place and the liquidation of this group of producers has caused the machine industry, for example, great losses and many drawbacks. These losses are not accountable since the value of the machine industry has long been calculated in terms of kilos and tonnes. The "weight" plan was executed, but the machines, brought to a standstill by the lack of small, light and therefore statistically unimportant parts, could not be used. And this of course was not revealed numerically in any indicators.

Faults in plannnig, insufficient contact with the market, or in other words the abstract bureaucratization of trade, the production of useless and unmarketable products (which are, however, carefully accounted for in the national revenue) all this—irreversible and unstoppable owing to technical as well as legal and formal considerations —continues to undermine the workers' faith in their work and forces them to question its aims and justification. Tardiness and irregularity in stock deliveries are often linked to thoughtless production investments, occurring because all investment decisions are taken by the central Party apparatus while scientists and economically knowledgeable people are eliminated from the sphere of production. The "production investment" mania is based on the mechanical selection of sites where a new "working class" is formed, whether needed or not. Mistakes in investing invariably have their revenge. The losses which occur are uncalculated and unaccounted for, and of course unpublicized. It therefore seems hard to blame a useless factory for its low productivity.

THE coordination of various elements is difficult in such a system and its proper expression in terms of indicator figures near impossible. Hence the frequent occurrence of fictitious norms, figures and indicators in its plans and the illusory nature of any attempts to establish the *actual* level of work effectiveness. Workers can work hard while the actual results of their work may nevertheless be described as low in productivity since they are low in effectiveness. At this point it is worth remembering Lenin's oft-quoted saying that it is precisely in the sphere of work productivity that the concrete competitive battle between socialism and capitalism takes place. If Lenin's analysis and predictions are to be taken seriously, then the victory of capitalism is clear.

Our working class lacks enthusiasm. Instead there is frustration, fluctuating staff, an impatience for change which is manifested in the fact that as many as half a million workers annually quit their jobs. Work and "production" grievances combine to this effect. But this is of course passed over by the absurd propaganda, which

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beautifies and varnishes the economic reality of socialism, and to which "progressive" Western circles so easily and willingly succumb. In our working world it is capitalism which is popular—a frequent cause of surprise for the socialist zealots who come to us from the West. Capitalists, monopolists and private managers cannot "eat three dinners," as we say here (following Marx's remark about feudal lords), and even the most luxurious aspects of their lifestyle form no more than a tiny fraction of their profit, the main bulk of which makes its way back to society in the form of investments or interest on capital. In communist countries, on the other hand, the administrative machinery, the enforcement machinery and the record keeping machinery, devour a huge part of the national revenue, an incalculable sum, while at the same time managing to occupy millions of people in fruitless work.

All the while, services and production limp along. People's lives are ruined by constant delays, unavailable commodities, and queues in trade and communication. The social pyramid is reversed, many spheres of production and work are deprived of what is due to them because of the concentration of facilities, funds and efforts in fields which often turn out to have been wrongly selected because our self-styled planners incorrectly analysed domestic and world markets. The capitalists are professionals, forced to be such by the mechanism of the market; the communist ministers lack such knowledge.

WE now arrive at the most delicate and characteristic cause of all socio-economic frustrations in socialism: the almost surrealistic idea of the productive PLAN.

The capitalists, as we know, have no plan of production, but rather are directed by the animal law of competition and profit as well as by the need of predatory domination of the market, resulting from an unceasing flow of new products. From this, as we also know, result the usual maladies of capitalism: over-production, waste, unemployment. We, the socialists, will plan our production to avoid all this; therefore we must first formulate a plan. Plans vary. They can cover a wide perspective of say five years or as little as one year. This latter instance is of course an absurd segment of, say, an investment cycle, but it does affect the whole organization as well as the system of pay, premiums and rewards. The plan is a sacred cow around which everything else revolves. But where, in fact, does it come from?

This, the most important question, no one can answer with certainty. In the end the plan seems to come from the air, or to be dictated by fate, even though it is preceded by innumerable discussions. Capitalist enterprises produce independently of one another, compete with one another and fight for the market. The result is usually overproduction or waste of unsold goods, so often pointed out by critics. So in socialism, in the planned economy, it was decided

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to establish exactly the production plans required; neither more nor less, but precisely so as to square with needs and production possibilities. But once again a trifling detail presents itself: exactly how and by whom is this to be done? How is one to gather the necessary data; on what basis is one to develop the main indicators and features of the plan, both qualitative and quantitative? Should it be done by the management of the enterprises on the premises, bound by considerations of budget, deliveries, assignments, cooperating with the central authorities, or by central planners, endowed with the rank and dignity of ideological infallibility (which is, after all, the most important thing)? After a myriad of chaotic, confused interventions, resulting from their inadequate conceptions and mediocre abilities, only politicians and dilettantes remain, while the plan itself becomes, on the central macro-scale as well as on the level of the individual factory, an absurd figment of imagination, accident and incompetence. Or else it turns out, on the basis of hurriedly computed figures, to be too large or too small and relatively unrealistic with a view both to demand and to production possibilities. Such a plan often results in unsellable goods and production that is useless or shoddy. In effect the plan indicators remain a theoretical and abstract fiction, taking no heed of practical demands.

And it is around such a fiction that all production activity centers, the whole system of work organization, assets, pay and allowances. The plan's faults nevertheless fail to come to light until much later on in the game and in a curious place: the market. For here the scarcity of goods is considerable, despite equally considerable production costs. It is here that the social deficit of the system, hidden in budgets and national revenue tables, finally reveals itself, to be borne by millions of people.

Thus production is quite independent of the needs of the people and the "plan" becomes an end in itself. A system of one monopolistic producer and a central plan of production has become, contrary to its presuppositions, a system of chaos and atomized action which turns the state machine against the people. It is doubly monopolistic, since in this system political power is closely joined to the economic; and this power is neither controlled by nor subject to public criticism, since the tools of criticism—the press, radio, parliament, etc.—lie in the hands of that same power. This situation is reflected in the Polish saying, "If things are so good, then why are they so bad?" Another popular saying: "In socialism we sacrifice ourselves to defeat problems which exist in no other system." But the socialist planner and the producer who implement the plan are unconcerned with its social consequences. After all, the plan is a global one; its indicators, which shape people's minds over a number of years, are universal; and there are no individual producers or tradesmen who might speedily and at their own risk attempt to patch up its holes and mistakes.

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OF late there has been much talk in the West about "human rights" in socialist countries, meaning purely political and moral rights such as freedom of speech, freedom to travel, to form unions, etc. But no one raises the question of the complete absence in socialism of individual or collective economic rights, rights of economic initiative. For although we do have the "right" to work, the possibility of obtaining a job from the state, this right, far from improving the general standard of living, only perpetuates the unprofitable and yet unchangeable state of affairs. Yet from time to time certain reforms in the system are successfully effected. They are usually directed towards decentralizing economic decisions, allowing, for example, through a decrease in the number of indicators and production norms imposed from above, a certain amount of flexibility in the operation of the "plan," giving more individual freedom of action to trade and industries, allowing them to settle autonomously their gains and losses in the market. These reformist tendencies are encouraged by the expansion of foreign trade. This expansion disturbs the holistic structure of communism. The "law of value," while non-existent within, must be applied without. Hence the numerous breaches of the official schema: the currency exchange rates are always absurdly fluctuating, and there are many individual ways of making money by means, for example, of speculating with black market dollars. This is by now tolerated and usually fails to arouse the suspicion of ideological leaders in that it takes place, or so it is assumed, in a "no-man's land" beyond the main "exemplary" socialist sectors.

Generally speaking, the more successful of these reform tendencies represent the socialist way of gaining access to the various market mechanisms of capitalism. It manifests itself in partially self-sufficient enterprises and in the profitability of individual undertakings, although any profits from these immediately vanish as they are syphoned off into the state treasury. The artificial isolation of these attempts and the accidental nature of the results is revealed, for example, in the absurdly disproportional relations of prices, which are sometimes paradoxically low, sometimes too high.

Thus instead of the advantages that one might expect from reforming socialism, it is mainly the faults and weaker aspects of capitalism that burden the "reformed" socialist system. The uncontrollable fluctuations of prices, the conflicts between different and independent branches of production and the disproportionally high foreign currency values on the black market, sanctioned by the creation of a network of state stores which sell export goods to the internal market at equally exorbitant rates of exchange: all these phenomena are symptoms of such reform. A decentralizing process brought about artificially, not organically (without interested individual producers) leads not to improvements but to atomization and further chaos.

In the attempt to create, along state-governed lines, such capitalist

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institutions as advertising, ready market and sales outlets, a connexion between trade and production, independent or even competing enterprises and material stimuli, one attains results contrary to the original intention. For when new ways of organization are created, a whole new bureaucratic network of control and accountancy is automatically introduced as well. These are the indispensable tools of state control, lest the reforms over-step their arbitrarily imposed limits in relation to "socialism" and the labour regulations controlling employment.

No one, least of all the state itself, knows what is or is not economically advantageous for the country. Should production be increased if we lack productive materials and forces? Should we (and if so, how?) break the plan by stopping the production of unmarketable goods? And how, without disturbing the plan, are we to introduce technological innovations? It seems doubtful that anyone could grasp the situation through the poorly informative figures of their balance sheets. Yet the economic outcome of all this is heavily felt by the hard-working population which must bear the burden of deficits in individual productive spheres.

SOCIAL life in socialism is tinged by chronic nervousness. For the essence of life for a major part of society is an imbalance between the amount of money circulating or held in savings and the supply of goods available on the market. In recent years of successively unprofitable investments, the crisis in Poland has been a chronic one. In such a situation, the only safety valve for the state is to seek aid from the West and to swamp the market with expensive luxury goods. These would then drain society of its excess money and perhaps of foreign currency, for private access to dollars from visits or relations abroad are the "private" person's means of defence against socialist inflation. The socialist countries are constantly being promised a "bright future" to come when investments start to bring in benefits. And yet, unprofitable production and investments beyond our means make up everyday life. One is reminded of the sign above the door of an inn, which read "Cash today, credit tomorrow." Every day this sign would be shown to the guests: "today" never ends and "tomorrow" never comes.

Outside observers tend to emphasize some modifications of this system; but in its economic and organizational reality, it has remained the same consistently realized and upheld system. The centrally established and yet "decentralized" stimuli and indicators which are supposed to imitate the capitalist market mechanism do not stand the test of practice, often obstructing the plan from being carried out below. The "socialist market" inevitably involves all kinds of manipulation among those in power: the local administration, the central administration, the controlling powers on various rungs of the administrative ladder and the party powers that oversee them—

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floods of paper between various branches of authority are substituted for productive life. News of the failure of the plan is broadcast more or less faithfully (for those who have the will and the ability to decipher the code) alongside fanfares which proclaim its execution and over-fulfilment. But both leave the people in a state of indifference. They do not take the whole thing seriously, led by the instinctive feeling that this unavoidable bureaucratization of the forms of production gives rise to a consistently troublesome and irrational situation on the market. Criticism of low work effectiveness, unexecuted plans, waste or even rampant bureaucracy is often allowed in the communist press, but the attacks are only directed against unconscientious or incompetent executors. The reader is never allowed to entertain the notion that not the execution but the concept itself—the plan imposed from above, ultimately the system itself: socialism—is at fault.

Attacks on bureaucracy present it as an incidental disease, never as an intrinsic quality of socialism. In rare cases when some dignitary is posthumously, or even while he is still living, politically condemned, he is burdened all at once with the blame for all his errors as well as those of others. Hence the "errors and distortions" of Stalin and the "hare-brained schemes" of Khrushchev or the euphemistic description of the type, "the period of the cult of the personality," "the errors of the previous period," "the errors of the Gomulka-ist system," and so forth. Of course the criticism shields and defends the central Party apparatus; its superior ranks may change, but its core remains inviolate to the extent that these same people who once implemented the "errors and distortions" of the bygone era, now participate without blinking an eye in the political and economic practices of the "new stage." The justification of everything as "difficulties of the stages" leading to socialism is often accompanied by throwing the blame onto the allegedly still existing and active "class enemy" constantly created anew by the system.

The fact is that the state interests are not identified by the average citizen with those of society. For since the state chooses to do everything itself, to preside over education, entertainment and services, since even the circus and dancing must be state governed, then—so reasons our average citizen—we should not concern ourselves with the state; it is not our affair.

ALTHOUGH the areas of underproduction may change, a hole patched up in one spot generally appears in another. Underproduction collides with the massive, ever-growing demand for products; allowing demand to grow without being able to satisfy it either in trade or production is a speciality of socialism. The conflict is intensified by the constant stream of propaganda which "allows for future development," which proclaims the euphoria of modernity and industrialization, which endlessly advertises productive processes

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in the cinema, on television, and in the press. People eventually start to believe that they will find on the market all that they hear about. They proceed to look for it in hordes, to bribe salesmen and often end up buying out everything but the thing for which they came in the first place. The endless pursuit of all goods and, on the other hand, the ever expanding cult of production combine to form a sort of socialist "consumer society." Swindlers and crooks of all kinds thrive here; they are able constantly to transgress against "socialist property" by dint of finding gaps in the regulations, by substituting concrete, material, although illegal, incentives for paper ones, and by offering bribes for speedier delivery of goods. The worst fate is reserved for industrious, disciplined and honest people who are disoriented on the one hand by the changing policies from "above" and the inapplicability of regulations to real life, on the other by the successes of those who "rectify" the system of production and introduce illegal activities into its realm. For contrary to the proclaimed ideals, many spheres acquire their character through the activities of small money grabbers and through their dealings on the sly, through cynics, materialists and petty plunderers. They form a new type: the nationalized middle classes.

Another product of the system are the disillusioned, apathetic, passive citizens and the once disinherited small producers. Among them flowers indifference, nihilism and the more timid varieties of self-indulgence. They are characterized by their disbelief in any forthcoming change and by a lack of any feeling of responsibility for what is happening. When they went over to state production, they were freed of all responsibility, since no one owns anything apart from his flat, garden and, at best, car—and even this is liable at any moment to be snatched away by changing prices, pay and taxes. In this situation it is the "semi-legalists" who most quickly supplement their earnings, or even the common criminals who have nothing to lose and who are treated comparatively leniently by the law, as they represent a non-ideological menace. Since by now few can imagine any other system, the attitude of passive acceptance is created; it involves waiting for the state to provide, organize, assign and arrange. All the social services such as education, medical care, insurance, vacations, transport, and so on, flow from the state; hence the state has the responsibility to provide and we are concerned only with using its services.

Groups of workers from privileged key industries in Poland—those from Silesia for example—are characterized by this attitude. They have no interest in any fundamental change in the system; in any case their imagination does not reach that far, never having known production other than that which is nationalized, employees other than those of the state, not ever having seen elections, real criticism, or a real press. They simply want, the situation being as it is, to receive more from the state because they deserve it. They have grown

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accustomed to their individual inactivity, to being looked after by someone; they do not and will not understand the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the system. Kept in the dark for years, they have adopted the word "socialism" in their vocabularies without any further specification, along with the rest of the Party jargon. These people are ostensibly the faithful praetorians of the system, they stand at its forefront, they are specially looked after by the state which often supplies them with provisions from outside the market. But when these people, having encountered too drastic deficiencies in their means of subsistence and in the organization of their lives, begin, motivated by purely material causes, to rebel, then the whole state begins to creak. Internal difficulties, unpredicted by Marx, in the countries which became socialist, have eventually evoked discontent among the ranks of precisely the working class. Imbued with a simplified form of Marxism for many years, the workers suddenly, to the surprise of the Party, began to believe that they are indeed the ruling leading class. It is here, then, and not in the barely visible activities of the conscious critics of the system—ideologists or economists—that one should seek the genesis of the political upheavals which took place in Poland in 1956, 1970 and 1976.

ANOTHER notable anti-mechanism in the socialist system is the currency circulation and its social effects. Where everything belongs to the state, the economy will not profit by lively currency circulation. It would simply complicate matters, demanding as it does the costly manipulation of its transference from one pocket to another. Hence the reluctance to invest in services such as, for instance, new restaurants which, while they accelerate currency circulation and simplify consumption, offer nothing in the productive sphere. Hence, the laziness and incompetence of the trade and service apparatus, which improves slightly when foreign currency or private initiative is permitted. Hence, further, the reluctance to employ people in "non-productive" jobs, which allegedly do not increase the national revenue. The authorities prefer the national currency to be saved in banks instead of circulating. Even if it brings a large profit to the given institution, that profit invariably disappears into the state coffers. And since the socialist state is itself the source of money, it has no need of such an influx of funds—unless of course there is some "activity" which, while not depleting the goods or labour forces, serves to drain the potential buyer's market and to decrease the private funds which present a possible danger. This task is filled for instance by much-encouraged money games and lotteries or by selling shoddy and old goods at low prices. And finally there is the most important and socially most destructive method: alcohol, mass-produced and sold by the state.

There is another strange phenomenon in this sphere, which concerns the relation of "decentralized" socialist enterprises to the cur-

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rency which circulates among them and which is regulated by the gains and losses predicted in the plan. The state will, for example, financially support an institution for public use, otherwise known as an institution of "collective consumption." It is characteristic that, although it represents no more than the mere transfer of internal funds from one state pocket to another, the interplay of financial relations, which is mutual both among state institutions and between these and the state treasury, nonetheless has a tendency to petrify. It is also more difficult to change than the analogous manipulations of real money in a free-market economy, which are indirectly dependent on sales and demand. If, for example, many people make use of urban transport and if the money thus earned brings unexpected gains, or the possibility of diminishing state subsidies, instead of the usual losses, the surplus gained also vanishes anonymously into the state bank. It is not used for the increase of supplies required by growth over and above the "planned quota." For the state wants to keep its budgetary anti-inflation financial balance—the state cannot go bankrupt. This end is served by balance sheets and the sum of individual income- and spending-plans as well as its own investment priorities and balance. This balance can be disturbed by no unpredictable signals from a "market demand" which would indicate an equally unpredictable growth of some "consumption." One consideration controls the decisions here: namely, that no enterprise is to have the possibility of directing its own, independent economy, that it is not to show any initiative which is not dependent on the pre-arranged general "collective" plan. For were this not the case, the result would undoubtedly constitute a deviation in the direction of the condemned capitalist market economy. There do, in fact, exist enterprises which function "on their own account," but only those selected by higher authorities and in spheres and proportions accounted for by the plan.

THIS is the general catalogue of the strange properties of socialism. Is it surprising that this picture is usually hidden from Western eyes? If one does not live here it is difficult to define, from afar or even from a closer distance, the reality of the oppression which reigns here. This is why some observers, separated body and soul from the real situation, can deny that it exists at all—especially since they are unable to read our horrifyingly absurd press. Our totalitarianism is cleverly masked, it relies on the naïveté and the lack of imagination of those outside the system, which proves to be very effective. And those who are subject to this system, as well as its rulers, whether or not they want it, grow accustomed to its categories and come to think of it, if not as normal, then at least as inevitable. When on vacation abroad, they are not eager to recount their experiences at home, feeling that they will not be understood, least of all by Western "progressive" circles. For while the economic basis for capi-

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talism is simple, arguments in its favour, especially in the face of its critics, are complicated and unpopular, whereas Western arguments for socialism are demagogically simple and persuasive.

It is perfectly acceptable to criticize capitalism in the West and everyone takes the opportunity to do so. It is also acceptable in principle to criticize socialism; but since few people do so, not knowing exactly what it is, it remains a hope or an alternative in the minds of many of the uninformed. In the East, however, it is permissible to criticize only capitalism; hence capitalism is subject to double criticism from two parts of the globe. Sovietologists, who are to a large extent American, are generally " blind men talking about colour " and often ascribe American technocratic criteria to the communist world, which hardly makes sense. Western journalists accredited in the East who are subject to censorship, generally exhibit similar misconceptions and confusions. I might mention here that the Eastern and Central European countries of the " people's democracy " might prove to be more significant, when examined, than Russia itself. For their societies are living proof of how normal life is transformed over a period of years into a socialist one, and how the innate pluralism of thought is transformed into the government of one opinion.

Here of course the old question suggests itself: is another socialism possible apart from that of Eastern Europe; is this socialism really of an " incorrect " nature, was its direction decided solely by neighbouring Russia and its Byzantine ways, or will the " Eurocommunists," having come to power in one of the industrialized countries of the West conduct matters differently? And so on and so forth. I am hardly a zealot for scholastic discussions about what socialism is and is not. It is best to stick to the concrete. In the present case, this amounts to analysing the situation where the conditions set by a political dictatorship in a society with a nationalized economy, has brought the results, economic, social and moral, which I have tried to describe here. It should be noted that socialism of the kind that was applied in the countries of Eastern Europe would be an irreversible catastrophe for developed Western countries. For an automatic social mechanism, once demolished, is extremely difficult to rebuild. This should be noted not only on a practical level. One should have the courage to formulate it also on a theoretical and ideological level, to revise the concept of " socialism " and to strip the word itself of its magical charm which still attracts the uninformed. The idea of a " dictatorship of the proletariat " becomes inevitably a dictatorship of an omnipotent oligarchy which wields a dual power unknown in the West: both political and economic. Such a system is ruled by people who have greater power than anyone in capitalism (greater even than that of fascist dictators) but who themselves are powerless in the face of the inevitable effects which result from their theory and, later, their practice, which stultify all spontaneous social forces

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and initiatives. Schematic and rigid state mechanisms paralyse all spontaneous manifestations of life with a constant stream of rules, decrees and prescriptions which are supposed to regulate everything. To build this ingenious but actually absurd machine with a view to maintaining an impractical and unpopular system is the cost of socialism. As the popular Warsaw saying goes: "Is it socialism yet, or is it going to get worse?"

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Critical Voices on the Economy

Extract from the introduction by Professor Edward Lipinski to a report on Poland's economic situation issued by KOR.

The system in which the general conditions of development are centrally planned enables one to define the share that consumption and accumulation should have in the national product, as well as to define individual and collective consumption, and production and infrastructural investments. It is a great opportunity for planning but also a great danger since it can lead to tension and crisis. Up to now, this opportunity has not been used correctly. Too great a ratio of accumulation has already, on more than one occasion, created the symptoms of a crisis. Neglect of the infrastructure created tragic situations in housing, in communications, and in the health service. The one-sided stress on quantity and on the growth rate lowered selectivity and led to bad workmanship. The reason for these failures can be found in the way economic decisions are reached. They are reached in a closed circle of the party leadership, without proper preparation and without wider discussion. To a great extent they are haphazard and stem from definite myths, such as the myth of the primacy of production, particularly in heavy industry, the myth of the accelerated growth strategy, and so on. This proves that without political reform, without democratization and decentralization, there is no way to correct the economic system, which is glaringly irrational.

The other basic problem that has to be solved is the establishing of a system of criteria capable of assessing the proper functioning of an enterprise, so that it would remove the contradictions that the criteria now used create (quantity, weight, additional net value, sales, etc.). A system approaching the optimum should encourage innovation, should contain incentives for lowering production wastage, should guarantee suitable quality and quantity and a proper assortment of goods, and should be inflation-proof. The control mechanisms of the system should be automatic; they should not need constant outside intervention, though one must concede that no mechanism is ideal. That is why one needs a certain amount of both internal and external competition; otherwise, monopolies arise which, making use of their power, act against the consumer and disregard technological progress. That is why we propose the establishing of Supervisory Councils consisting of shop-floor delegates, consumers, and independent members, councils which, in the socialist interest, would control an enterprise's activities. That is why we propose the creation of an independent consumer movement entitled to intervene in the production process. Social life, to develop properly, requires co-operation and interaction among its many elements. Harmony is the result of struggle, not of commands from above. Only under

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such conditions can one guarantee optimal social and economic progress and achieve the high degree of adaptability essential if most crises associated with economic development are to be avoided.

Speech* delivered by Deputy Ryszard Bender in the Polish Seym during the debate concerning the Bill on the quality of goods, services and buildings, 8 February 1979.

Mr Speaker, today we are discussing good workmanship. To begin with, I would like to say that a good example of good work was the resolution of the Council of Ministers of 15 December 1978 which restored to the Catholic University in Lublin the right to confer academic degrees. And if the grotesque intake limits to first-year courses of the Lublin Catholic University are withdrawn (e.g. Romance philology is allowed to take in four persons) then one might believe that the bad spell is over. When one of our women members of Parliament present here began her Romance philology studies at our University, the number of first-year students only was over 50. I am not striving for so many places but I have a feeling that the deans would be happy even if the number was trebled to a dozen students accepted to first-year Romance philology with a corresponding increase in other departments, as mentioned in my last speech in Parliament. But this is perhaps a question of details. I turn to you, Minister Gorski, in the hope that you will do everything to remedy the situation in which the intake limits to the Lublin Catholic University are so glaringly out of proportion in relation to other universities. Let me thank you in advance.

Honourable Members, other reflections occasioned by the proposed bill do not inspire optimism in all respects—nor indeed do the facts quoted today by some of the members. We have, however, assembled here in order to think about solutions to difficult situations, whenever they should arise. We have to start with ourselves, with the top, as ordinary people say, whose complaints I had often occasion to hear while travelling by bus, a more reliable means of transportation than trains which have altogether lost their pre-war reputation. I wonder whether they will ever recover that reputation, Transport Minister? It is a rather rhetorical question, isn't it? And how are we not to complain about ourselves, even about the Seym whose members we are and its Presidium (I hope I will be forgiven for saying this, Mr Speaker, but even in the best of families there is no lack of discontent), when the text of the bill is distributed only a few days before the session. The text reached me by express post only last Sunday and I could start studying it on Sunday afternoon.

* This speech created a sensation in Poland and was circulated in *samizdat*. As a result, Ryszard Bender lost his seat in the subsequent Seym (Ed.)

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Four days is not a very short time but it is not quite enough. Naturally a lot depends on administration. Recently we have read in *Polityka* an interview with a distinguished person from our own Seym circle and there it was suggested that the members of Parliament do not want to contradict the opinions of the administration but prefer rather to correct its mistakes. Is this really the wish of all members? We should consider and discuss this.

Mr Speaker, I want to be frank. I do not know whether it is appropriate to consider the suggested bill just now, whether we will not see in it an element of "playing safe." We demand good workmanship from the lower links of our economic life, from the executors, while we know, or should know, that they themselves very often, indeed too often, put the blame for bad quality of production on the so-called top. We have to be aware of this.

For the considerable economic chaos towards the end of last year the average citizen blames, if not the government itself, then its different departments and not the winter, the snows, and other atmospheric adversities. It was up to those departments and their subordinates to realize that we don't live in the tropics and to see to it that houses are warm enough and that no gross negligence occurs in the power industry, transport, and supplies of necessities.

There is no need to say more on the subject, all this was even more acute in Warsaw than in the provinces. People are wondering, however, and talk about the fact that no single minister felt responsible for this situation and resigned.

Nothing can explain away the fact that no one reacted when *Trybuna Ludu* announced, on 12 and 19 December 1978, that the Warsaw heat and power generating had no reserves of coal and that arrears of coal supply, already considerable in November, were still increasing. Why then by the end of December had nothing changed; whose negligence was responsible here? To blame everything on a sudden bout of winter is not convincing. In some other countries such winters are quite normal. Was it not possible to find out in good time how people cope with severe winters in the Soviet Union or the Scandinavian countries? The necessary measures were not taken even towards the end of January when, after temporary warmer weather, it became cold again. On 30 January 1979 the *Kurier Lubelski* wrote dramatically: "No salt even for the main roads." There was no shortage of salt even in the days of the Blessed Kinga, but today there is no salt. It is hard to understand.

And how can one complain about censorship which lets through such sensational news? And yet complain I must.

For example in one of Lublin's duplicating centres I was allowed to take only one copy of the Mayor's letter to me, the deputy, because of its Catholic contents, as the manageress said. I had to give in.

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I will not give any more examples of " good " (in quotation marks) over-zealous work. I have other things on my mind. How, ladies and gentlemen, can we demand adequate production when the supply of some articles on the market is so small that anything that happens to be available is immediately sold out? Improved quality cannot be achieved by means of a system of norms and sanctions. Appeals to people's civic virtues can have only a limited effect on the quality of work turned out. As long as it is the producer's, not the consumer's, market there is little hope of real improvement of quality.

The problem of the quality of goods and services is closely connected with the economic system. Quality is an element of the overall situation shaped by a given set of economic principles—in other words, the rules of the economic game. Our present system, whether we want it or not, favours quantity over quality. We are aware of the fact that all goods are in short supply and hence the hurry, the readiness to accept goods of inferior quality so as to at least get something. It is a chain of dependence—from the producer of basic raw materials all the way up to the producer of complex final products. This morning, for example, in one of the news-stands I bought a rarity: neutral shoe polish. I opened the box with difficulty—it was badly made—to check whether the colour was right. It was brown. I apologized politely to the saleswoman (not she to me) and got another box, but I realized that just as easily I might have heard that brown was the only polish she had. Of course there are goods in ample supply as well: you can find in shops plenty of de luxe almanacs so expensive that no one buys them. All the same they are made because they allow for a large so-called plan processing. At the same time there is less and less paper for books, and now also for newspapers.

All, or nearly all, of us know how all export rejects are sought after in our country. For birthday or even wedding presents people give things that were not good enough for export. A product which has been rejected in some other European country, or in Africa or Asia, is still an object of our dreams. That it should come to this! What can one say of the quality of goods for the home market, where supplies are short and people will buy anything, even trash, though it may take a little ingenuity.

On 16 December 1978 *Slowo Powszechne* was sorry to report that in the shoe shop " Cizemka " in Bydgoszcz all galoshes on sale were red, all the left ones being size 35, while the right ones were size 40. A friend of mine, for whom colour is immaterial, bought a pair of such galoshes and then in the sales another pair of boots, out of which he uses only the right one. It is a true story! But at least his feet are dry and he laughed at me when I caught a cold. . . .

The cult of export goods has really reached the limit. On 27 January we could watch on television how a producer boasted that

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they cultivate mushrooms exclusively for export, while the home market gets dried mushrooms only, which are of course a waste product. When there was a shortage of matches in the Lublin voivodship, we could read in *Kurier Lubelski* on 30 January that the Czestochowa Match Factory explained: "Our production is geared to export. Our export in 1979 will be trebled in relation to 1978 and therefore we do not envisage in 1979 any deliveries from our factory to the Lublin market." Now this is a terrifying answer, even absurd. Production increases but there are to be no deliveries to the home market. This is total confusion.

It is then not surprising that the citizen in a long meat queue ascribes meat shortages to the excessive export to various parts of the globe. All the more so because of the long queues at the meat purchasing centres: this time the queues of the meat sellers. Few people, however, are aware of the fact demonstrated by our colleague, deputy Waclaw Auleytner, in his latest Parliamentary speech of 21 December 1978. He showed us that our cattle stock is the size of that of Western Germany, and our pig stock even larger, in fact we occupy the fifth place in the world. This has to be somehow explained to the people.

And now inflation. Money is rapidly losing value and we are aware of that. A new kind of currency comes more and more often into use—the so-called convertible money. People get less and less value for their money. We need another Wladyslaw Grabski to give the zloty its value back, as happened many years ago.

Mr Speaker, our economy is in need of bold and consistent solutions rather than regulations and a flood of adminstrative instructions. The nation still believes that the political team which came to the helm of the State in 1970 knows how to select a think-tank capable of working out the best economic solutions within the present political system.

The authority of the post-December 1970 political leadership centred around your person, First Secretary, is still considerable, even great—despite those on the right and left who would perhaps hope to the contrary. But it is important for the country and the nation that the bond between the governors and the governed is being constantly strengthened, despite the existing differences in outlook on life. A sensitive public opinion exerts no less an influence on the life of the country than regulations and adequate economic solutions. 75 years ago Roman Dmowski wrote: "Public opinion—if it is not to be mere formality and fiction—cannot float in the air, cannot be pure disembodied thought, but must have its roots in society itself, must be a spiritual expression of its vital functions and of its life." In Poland—a country with a Catholic majority—one cannot be content with only a partial reading of public opinion if it is going to be representative. It is also important what the masses of

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people expressing the Catholic public opinion think and feel. Those of their authentic aspirations that can be carried out in our specific conditions should be realized.

Mr Speaker, and what can be said about the text of the proposed act itself? There is no doubt that the intentions of its authors have been the best. There are many lofty phrases in it since the problem of the quality of production is important. What depends on it is the quality of life in society, the wealth of the State and of the nation. Most of the regulations in this act, however, cannot be enforced. They are in fact based on wishful thinking.

Nowhere, and especially in our conditions—as I have just tried to show—can quality be secured by means of a normative act, even the best of acts. It will be only even more embarrassing when, despite the act, bad quality goods, badly made and ill-equipped houses continue to be produced. It will bring about a devaluation of the act and what is the use of this? And besides, as lawyers have said since ancient times: *summum iniuria.* And this should perhaps also be taken into consideration.

Economic mechanisms should play their part and bring about an improvement in the quality of goods. But we, the deputies, are not the ones to look for such mechanisms. In Parliament we can ascertain their presence or absence—and we are doing this. But how to bring about an improvement in the quality of goods is the worry of specialists, experts that the government has at its disposal. Strictly speaking, this is within the competence of particular departments, of which we have many. Much will also depend on the proper cooperation of the administration and economic institutions and the society at large. Society, let us hope, will appreciate the appeals contained in the resolution to be passed today in Parliament.

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Things I Have Known *

Jozef Kusmierek

I, A REPORTER, am not the only one to shrug my shoulders when the highest authorities assure me that our managerial control is really going to improve. Managers of vast enterprises and of small workshops, shift foremen in the mines, workers in steel and paper mills, in fact everyone involved knows full well that the whole economy is under the thumb of the nationalized railways. It is simple: either the goods trains are there and production can proceed or they are not and there is no production. This is the secret of the " managerial control " problem.

The railway has become a dictator not only in the realm of transport but also in the technology of production and in the selection of raw materials for industry.

The whole world has had to accept containerization and has gradually come to love it: industrial life without containers is no longer imaginable. But in Poland the containerized tonnage fell by 300,000 tonnes between 1970 and 1977 and that despite administrative pressure to the contrary.

Polish railways, which do not have to compete with road transport, forced customers to load their containers onto ordinary goods trucks. This required such an immense amount of lifting equipment at both ends that it was enough to put the industry off the containers. Not even instructions from the prime minister, detailing quantities of goods to be containerized, had the desired effect.

The pallets, the essential complement of the container, have meant a real technical revolution in goods handling in factories, on building sites, in the ports and warehouses. During the three five-year planning periods there were six committees for palletization and the modernization of goods handling. All of them produced a great number of instructions and regulations, prepared suitable texts for governmental orders and prime minister's exhortations but they all failed to make a jot of difference to the problem of specialized rolling stock. The palletization of sea cargoes, for instance, decreased by 159,000 tonnes between 1975 and 1977. The only form of growth to be noted is the number of people laughing at the problem: many more in 1979 than in 1970.

There are indeed more and more reasons for laughter. Take the bricks for the high rise blocks in Warsaw. They are loaded by hand into the railway trucks, unloaded manually at Warsaw goods yards, loaded by hand onto the pallets, which are then lifted onto lorries and finally lifted by a hoist to the 11th or 18th level of the building

* Abridged from an article in *Krytyka*, No. 3, Winter 1978-79.

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under construction. Why on earth must we have three manual operations in order to mechanize the last two? Well, it is not possible to carry the bricks by hand to the 18th floor and a hoist cannot be used to handle single bricks. So it was ultimately the hoist which made it imperative to use pallets and not ministerial instructions.

The railways decided that they would provide trucks only for loads going further than 100 kilometres. Short distance hauls would have to be made by road transport (which is scarce). I personally know of no construction plant which would not have a suitable quarry within a 50 kilometre radius of its works. When we buy building plant with all the accompanying technology from abroad, it is not our habit to warn the designers and the producers that the plant, once established in Poland, will be obliged to obtain the aggregate from a quarry over 100 kilometres distant. I have repeatedly asked members of the commercial delegations who negotiated the deals whether they forgot these facts. They admitted, with some contrition and much swearing me to secrecy that, while they were aware of the facts all the time, they thought it prudent to keep quiet. For two reasons: firstly, they were ashamed and secondly they feared that Western minds were ill-trained in understanding industrial absurdities.

How to explain to a blunted Western mind, which has no inkling of proper dialectics, that the gravel from Paczkow has to be carried to the Copper Basin although in the Basin there are numerous quarries capable of producing building sand and gravel? The Western blockhead might doubt the profitability of such an arrangement, not aware that, for a short distance, road transport is needed and only very little is available. As a result, most building plants were designed to receive sand and aggregates sent by rail. And so, to satisfy the 100 kilometre rule, the sand from Paczkow is taken to Lublin, the sand from Boleslawiec to Opole, to the Katowice Steel Works and to Belchatow. Miracles do not happen in the building industry; there can be no houses and no concrete without aggregates. As the works are designed to handle materials off the railway trucks, these have to be carried from a distance acceptable to the railway.

Recently the railways issued new routing instructions. Let me give you an example of their effect on industry: the Cellulose and Paper Mills in Kostrzyn require one truck load of limestone every second day. In the past, Kostrzyn used to have a reserve of limestone sufficient for 18 or 36 working hours in case of delivery difficulties. The equipment, the manning and the storage in Kostrzyn were designed to suit this particular arrangement. To make for greater efficiency, the Kostrzyn management had designed and constructed a number of special trucks to carry the limestone from the quarries to their works.

All went well until the railways decided to introduce new routing

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regulations which meant that Kostrzyn got 10 truck loads of limestone in every delivery (not in their own containers which had been removed). With their own trucks the unloading took 45 minutes per vehicle. The work now takes about 15 hours, monopolizes works personnel for that time and renders the works liable to fines for keeping the trucks for too long.

The management of the power station Bielsko Biala, conscious of the 100 kilometre rule, adapted a tipper truck for unloading instead of letting it rust uselessly until wiser counsel should prevail. Bielsko Biala is, however, too close to the coalfields to be allowed to use the railway. Although a sapper unit built a special road from the coalfield to the power station for motor vehicles, the management is trying to obtain coal from more distant coalfields near Gliwice so that the newly adapted equipment can be put to use. The distance between the supplier and the customer would be over the magic figure of 100 kilometres and all would be well.

The railways decreed that each customer should provide his own unloading equipment. That would be fine but only on the understanding that the railways should design it in the same way in which designs for family houses and for other standardized buildings are made available to potential users. I myself have begged the railway management to appoint a single producer of the equipment so as to ensure servicing. I tried to explain that if every customer designed his own equipment the railways would be hard put to cater not only for a variety of loads and routes but also for the diversified requirements at the unloading point.

As was predictable we now have as many types of unloading equipment as there are design offices among the railway customers. In the attempt to mechanize labour intensive unloading, most firms adopted the solution provided by a crane equipped with a grab of one sort or another: it was the cheapest. Grabs proved to be a disaster for the railway rolling stock. The railway management, in an act of self-defence, forbade the use of grabs in due course. With the grabs outlawed and the tippers not available there is only one course open: that of unloading manually. Except that there are no hands available for the job.

Yet another railway regulation managed to add to the confusion: each truck had to be loaded to its full capacity before being allowed to proceed. I have seen many times the mechanical loading of the "25" type of truck which takes between 15 and 30 minutes to load 20 to 22 tonnes of material. The "60" type which uses two mechanized loaders takes the same time to load a double consignment. But it takes two to three hours to load manually the remaining two or three tonnes to fill the truck to its full capacity.

Another devastating principle of operation is that every industrial and commercial enterprise in the country is judged by its financial turnover. This is particularly pernicious in the case of transport.

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On one occasion, a television team brought a school blackboard onto a site in desperation in order to demonstrate to all and sundry that bringing building materials from far away Lomza to Falenica, when they could be obtained from a few hundred metres down the road resulted in a waste to the tune of 10 million zlotys. The poor TV chaps! They brought the director of the plant in front of the blackboard and questioned him, they questioned the technicians involved: all to no avail. They should have, of course, looked for the works accountant. He would have explained that his enterprise was in fact doing very nicely, precisely because they were spending the extra 10 million and thus increasing the turnover and therefore the notional value of production. In this way, without any work being done the enterprise was better off by 10 million. It is for this reason that every enterprise tries to increase its transport costs: every kilometre/ tonne represents a clear gain in the books.

I HAVE been a journalist and a reporter for 35 years. I have never sat in the editorial chair: I very much dislike editorial conferences and the brain washing which goes on at courses and lectures. I have written only what I knew, what I saw and checked myself and was therefore able to report on with a sense of responsibility. This meant that on many occasions I had to struggle against the imbecility of censors trying to hide the obvious facts. On many occasions my work was declared " unprintable " and my person " unemployable."

The basic error of official propaganda is the assumption that the country at large is against the changes initiated in 1944. Not only the propaganda machine but the whole government strategy is based on this misconception. The government has taken an almost hysterical stance in expectation of a constant and very loud approval of anything they did. One would think that in the space of 30 years there would have been someone among the propaganda professionals who would see that no society can live forever in the condition of euphoria and of red hot enthusiasm.

It is not a sensible thing to go on and on lauding the railwaymen for overfulfilling the plan and for achieving brilliant results when everyone knows only too well that there is nothing brilliant about our railways. It does not do any good to show on television a team of triumphant miners who are said to have produced millions more tonnes of coal than expected to the peasants who are unable to get coal for love, money or bribes. And the people who for the last five years have been queuing for longer and longer in order to buy meat are not enamoured of the sight of heroic farmworkers who achieved a significant overfulfilment of the pig plan.

In search of success at any price the propaganda machine, inspired by the leadership, reaches for obvious lies: the press is full of news of ceremonial openings of factories barely off the design board and of figures of their imaginary production. A year ago Polish Television

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solemnly declared a start on the construction of the power station Truszow 2, while in fact there was nothing at all showing on the ground.

And about the Lublin coalfield? Everyone knows that the construction of a completely new undertaking of that size, the largest in Europe this century, is of great and lasting importance for our economy.

All the coal from Lublin is destined for the USSR and the insignificant remainder is to go to the local cooperatives. Now everyone who bothered to read what I have written knows that I have always supported the growth of our trade with the USSR. The exchange with a powerful partner is always more attractive than the " splendid " contracts with various Kings of Kings, Saviours of their Country and the Presidents who are likely to be deposed any day by a sergeant of their own bodyguard. The USA, Japan, Germany, France and Hungary are all trying to develop trade with the USSR. But our buffoon propaganda calls every export to the USSR " a gift " and the people, not surprisingly, call it " a deportation." We were never allowed to write even part of the truth about the advantages of trade with the USSR.

No export makes sense unless at least a part of the production is available for the home market. To open up the Lublin coalfield with all its infrastructure in order to export all its production is a palpable economic absurdity. Such enormous investment cannot be justified by the needs of our neighbours. Nor are the " safe " supplies for the local cooperatives quite enough.

I write about this in greater detail because every political crisis we ever had has brought up the problem of our relations and trade links with the USSR. The problem is both sensitive and inflammatory. It is not, however, a sound idea to re-examine our whole foreign trade strategy only when the advancing tanks rumble and the bullets are fired at the workers on the brink of a civil war. And this is precisely what we have had to do before now.

In 1976 the coal reserves for the energy industry, prescribed as the necessary minimum requirement in 1968, were lowered by 54 per cent. This was dangerously low but in December 1978 the reserves stood at only 10 to 20 per cent of that figure. Neither the snow nor the cold but the lighthearted abandoning of norms brought the government and the country to the brink. Was it in fact lightheartedness or was it a crime?

On New Year's Eve 1979, it was not just the heating and lighting of our homes which was at stake but the whole energy supply. Someone has put at risk not only the national well-being but the country's material civilization.

The managerial reforms, the sacrifices and the patience of the people, will all go for nothing unless there exists a measure of

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confidence, however modest, between the government and the people.

I FEEL fully entitled to express my views without fear of being victimized for my criticisms. If you care to look through the papers of the 1955–56 period you will find that the serious journalists of the time raised the alarm about the crisis about to erupt. We saw that the ruling team, misinformed by its own *apparat,* was well on the way to self destruction. As long as it was possible, despite the repressions and the official pinpricks, we kept on, warning against the last and final suicidal step. In the historical perspective it has become clear that our reason was not only a concern for the country but also for the ruling team itself.

I have witnessed as a journalist the five great political shocks of our time: September 1948, October 1956, March 1968 and the invasion of Czechoslovakia, December 1970, June 1976. I am absolutely sure (and this is not a wild guess) that we are about to witness yet another and the most serious, because structural, turmoil. The confidence in our present rulers has been whittled down to vanishing point and any changes which they are likely to introduce are seen as inimical to the interests of the country.

These are bitter words but they are not dictated by a desire to oppose for the sake of opposing: this is not an attack by an enemy. Read, if you care, the history of the People's Army and you will find my name in it. Or read any post-war anthology of either reportage or fiction and you will find my work.

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Survey
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Foreign Trade*

Eugeniusz Mozejko

THE share of exports in Poland's industrial output during the 1970s increased only slightly and by 1978 it amounted to 14·5 per cent. Exporting countries sell 20, 25 or an even greater percentage of their industrial output on foreign markets. It has not so far been possible to fulfil the second part of the new economic strategy: to switch the economy over onto a path of export-oriented development. The task will have to be tackled in future years.

The engineering industry and to a lesser extent light industry are already heading for that objective. During the 1970s they have increased their share in exports from 41 and 8·4 per cent in 1970 to 47 and 9·6 per cent. Apart from that, the share of fuels has also increased from 12·5 to 15·6 per cent, but that was mainly due to price increases. The share of farm produce and foods in exports has greatly diminished. The position of our chemical industry is poor; the share of its products in exports to socialist countries increased only slightly, while the share of its products in exports to other countries has markedly diminished (following a period of limited increase during the 1960s).

Obviously an increased contribution to the development of Polish exports should be expected most in the case of industries where the investment outlays have been greatest in recent years. One of those is the engineering industry. Over the past few years such divisions as precision industry, automotive industry, electrical engineering and electronics have been considerably expanded. The rise in exports of the engineering industry was rapid during 1971–78—over 3·5 times in terms of current prices. But in the last three years when we might have expected an "export boom" it increased by only 48·5 per cent. We still have an adverse trade balance in engineering products (over 1·2 billion exchange zlotys in 1977). The highly adverse trade balance continues in the case of precision products (nearly 370 million exchange zlotys), electrical engineering and electronic products.

Only four commodity groups in the engineering industry earn foreign currency of over one billion exchange zlotys for us: means of transport (4·4 billion, of which about a half is earned by ships), complete industrial plants (2·8 billion), metal products, construction machines and cranes. This proves the still low extent of export specialization of this industry. Only the first two of the groups just mentioned ensure a surplus of exports over imports. Hence in many fields of the engineering industry we are still lagging behind our trade partners who are better able to meet our import demands than we are able to meet theirs.

* First published in *Zycie Gospodarcze*, No. 33, 19 August 1979.

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What we have said of the engineering industry applies even more to other branches of the processing industry. On the list of Polish exports we find few items which bring major earnings. If we assume the threshold to be one billion exchange zlotys, it applies only to raw materials, chemicals and fertilizers taken together, textiles and ready-made clothes. Few of these ensure a surplus of exports over imports in the same commodity group.

In the past few years we have invested a great deal in the foodstuffs industry, but mostly with an eye on the domestic market. The foodstuffs industry is still earning a great deal of foreign currency, but the simultaneously increasing imports have reduced the traditionally positive balance of payments almost to zero. In addition the capacity of the furniture, textile and clothing industry has been developed. This has produced noticeable effects in the growth of exports but it would be difficult to consider them as being impressive. Exports of clothes increased from 1·2 billion exchange zlotys in 1975 to under 1·3 billion in 1977, and exports of furniture from 339 to 414 million exchange zlotys. Moreover there have been indications of increasing difficulty in selling light industry products in convertible currency markets which must inevitably exert an influence on the profitability of those exports.

The role which the steel industry could play in Polish foreign trade is giving food for thought. Until recently the deficit in steel amounted to some four million tonnes. The building of the Katowice Steelworks and modernization of old steelworks should make it possible to liquidate this deficit, which does not mean elimination of the imports of steel, but they should be balanced by the growth of exports. However, unfortunately, the structure of trade in steel products is disadvantageous. In imports, one tonne of steel products costs us some 60 per cent more than it earns in exports. This shows plainly that the development of export-oriented production of the Polish steel industry in future years should be concentrated on improvement of the structure and quality of output. The decisive factor as regards imports is to make production less steel-intensive. It has been calculated that excessively heavy building constructions, machines and equipment consume 3 to 3·5 million tonnes of steel in excess of technologically justified consumption. This could be reduced, but it would call for using steel of better quality. Consequently, given the present production capacity, there are opportunities for a radical improvement in the steel trade balance sheet.

In view of the tasks of Polish exports, the situation in the chemical industry is downright disquieting. In our trade in chemical products we have a highly adverse negative balance of payments; moreover, 65 per cent of those imports are from convertible currency countries whereas 60 per cent of our exports go to socialist countries.

Our principal exports are sulphur, nitrate fertilizers, pharmaceuticals and cosmetics. Recently we have not been able to utilize

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the demand in pharmaceuticals, plastics, paints and varnishes. On the other hand, our imports of finished and semi-finished chemical products are increasing. This is due to the situation on the investments front. According to the plan, during 1976–80 the rate of development of the Polish chemical industry was to exceed the average growth rate for all industries, but there have been delays in the building of several important plants for the production of carbon disulphide, olefins and polyvinyl chloride. At the same time, the extraction of sulphur remains on the same level.

Apart from speeding up investment projects which have been started, it is necessary to revise the long-term chemical industry development policy which, by the nature of things, is closely linked with markets abroad. In particular, it is necessary to settle the problem of whether it is advisable to develop the branches producing mass products on the basis of imported oil, phosphorite and also imported production equipment, or whether one should rather concentrate on more diversified, smaller-scale production calling for smaller investment outlays but for a greater input of technological know-how.

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Extent and Effects of Alcoholism in People's Poland

Halina Malinowska

ALCOHOLISM is the most telling and most dangerous symptom of our social ills: it seems that, at present, Poland occupies the first place among countries of the world in alcoholic consumption. A number of reports, some by official organizations, have been published, among them a study by the "Poland 2000" Committee of the Polish Academy. A *samizdat* review of their report, by J. Wojtaszek, has been reprinted in a Polish monthly *Aneks* (No. 19, 1978) published in London. We quote from it:

> Alcoholism is the most pernicious of social diseases as it effectively destabilizes the whole of society. At present, alcohol is also the most easily obtainable commodity on the market. Neither legislation nor the price increases have made any improvement: on the contrary, their frequently inept implementation has brought about a worsening of an already catastrophic situation. The lack of alternative attractive merchandise means that the redirecting of spending to other goods is not a feasible solution. The provision of leisure facilities which would exclude alcoholic consumption is quite inadequate: this is true of sport, recreation and cultural activities. The press, radio and television do singularly little to help. While a comprehensive act was passed in 1971 with the purpose of regulating the consumption of alcohol, its implementation led to an increase rather than a decrease of the problem.
>
> Fundamentally, the social danger of alcoholism lies not in the quantity drunk per head of the population but in the universally accepted model of drinking behaviour, the drinking pattern, and in the type of alcohol consumed. Polish drinks have a very high alcoholic content and we qualify for the world's top league in that respect.
>
> Only 10 per cent to 12 per cent of the French or Italian consumption falls on spirits, 13 per cent of Czechoslovak, 22 per cent of West German and 45·8 per cent of Swedish (until quite recently). In Poland 65·1 per cent of alcoholic beverages drunk in a year are spirits and the proportion is growing. In 1971–73 the consumption of spirits shot up twice as fast as that of wine, and much faster than that of beer. The structure of the 1974 price increases favoured spirits: their price was increased by 20·6 per cent, wine by 40·4 per cent and beer by 33·3 per cent. During the same period the consumption of spirits in the Scandinavian countries fell by 14·2 per cent: it has to be noted that in Sweden there is one outlet for the sale of alcohol for every 27,000 of the population, while in Poland there is one every few

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steps and alcohol is the only merchandise obtainable without difficulty.

The universally accepted pattern of drinking and drinking behaviour is the cause of great anxiety: 50 per cent of men, when they drink vodka, drink heavily and take ¼ litre at a time or more.

The reason most frequently given for drinking is the pursuit of fun, pleasure and gaiety followed closely by the wish to forget the daily worries and troubles. The two cannot be easily separated. Research has brought out the connexion between the extent of individual drinking and the lack of social adaptability and also between the abuse of alcohol and the presence of the common forms of neurosis.

The authors of the study found the spread of adult drinking patterns among the young particularly dangerous: the average age of the heavy drinking group has gone down considerably and continues to do so. In 1961–62 the most heavy drinking group was aged between 25 and 29; at present the age is 21 to 24. In the past the young in villages drank most, now the town has overtaken the village but the consumption increases inexorably among both groups. No teetotallers at all were found among people under age but 10 per cent of the adult male population do not drink. Among the young Americans and Scandinavians there are 20 per cent teetotallers but the Polish scouting tradition of abstinence has disappeared without leaving a trace. Over 25 per cent of schoolboys over 16 drink alcohol on the adult pattern i.e. ¼ litre or more at a time. The authors say that between 1968 and 1974 the cases of drunkenness among the young doubled. Between 1962 and 1972 the increase in alcoholic consumption among teenagers has been considerably greater than among the adult population.

Predictably, alcoholic consumption increases in step with wage increases, mainly because there is no competition in the form of other purchasable goods such as consumer durables. The study found that adults who owned more durable goods drank less but this was not true of teenagers.

Social background does not determine, it seems, adult drinking habits. Among the teenagers, the children of educated parents who do manual work themselves drank more than their contemporaries of working class origin. Extended education decreases drinking only when it coincides with a high degree of social adaptability. In large industrial conglomerates the more highly educated young workers drink more than the less educated. The same is true of farmworkers: more education means more drinking.

There is no effective counter-attack by the adults, either in a personal or institutional capacity. The number of broken families makes matters worse.

As in other spheres, the moment of acquiring adult independence which usually means starting work is also crucial in forming the drinking habit. Frequently, the habits at the place

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of work demoralize a newcomer: 10 to 15 per cent of drinking is done on work premises. The sessions are often attended by the bosses: in the building industry half of the drinking parties were so attended.

The number of alcoholics in Poland is estimated to be 400,000, possibly even half a million. There are also 50,000 (70,000 according to another estimate) chronic alcoholics and 12,000 to 15,000 people suffering from alcoholic psychoses.

Alcoholic therapy exists practically only in name. There are 428 clinics but most of them are only open for a few hours a week, 25 per cent are open only once or twice weekly. The standard of medical help is inadequate: there is one specialist doctor per 228,000 of the population. Only 440 doctors work in the clinics, 124 of them full time.

On 26 July 1978 the party daily *Trybuna Ludu* reported on a joint meeting of two parliamentary commissions: the Commission on Health and the Commission on Internal Affairs. The meeting was attended by representatives of the government, the Chief Prosecutor's Office, the Police HQ, the official Committee to Fight Alcoholism and the Society to Fight Alcoholism. The discussion concerned the implementation of the 1959 act on alcoholism and the subsequent legislation and regulations. *Trybuna Ludu* reported:

> We have had for nearly 20 years one of the most comprehensive anti-alcoholic legislations in the world. The 1971 act was amended by the ministerial decrees of 1972 and 1973 and the 1974 regulations of the Ministry of Labour. However, the speakers at the meeting were of the opinion that despite the legislative activity, the increase in the consumption of alcohol has accelerated in leaps and bounds and the social damage inflicted by the prevailing drinking patterns increased at a parallel rate.
>
> In the discussion the legislation was criticized for lack of precise definitions: thus, article 5 paragraph 3 of the act forbids the sale of drink with alcoholic content in the vicinity of railway stations, hospitals, schools, barracks, sports stadiums, etc. In practice, the "vicinity" proved a very flexible concept. Some local authorities consider a 200 metre radius enough for a beer kiosk to be open near a school, others judge 500 metres to be the necessary minimum. Paragraph 2 of the same article prohibits provision of too many outlets for the sale of alcohol. Again, "too many" proved too vague. Barbara Andreyczyn, a member of the Seym, said that there was at present one such outlet for each 750 of the population. A. Zarzycka argued that on top of that, 5 per cent of the grocery stores sold alcohol.
>
> The discussion extended to the problems of therapy. The act made it mandatory for the local authorities to establish 18 special hospitals. Only one authority has complied so far. A member of Seym, H. Kozniewska, said that in 1977 there were 2,300 on the waiting list for admission to closed hospitals.

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Patients directed for treatment by the courts had to wait, frequently for a number of years.

Under the title "We drink" the weekly *Polityka* published on 1 July 1978 an important article by J. Opolski. We quote:

> The annual expenditure on alcohol has reached 150 billion zlotys. In 1960 it constituted 16·5 per cent of the expenditure on food and drink. In 1977 the percentage grew to 30·5.
>
> The Society to Fight Alcoholism produced two papers for the government, both prepared by a team of doctors and lawyers, presided over by Professor S. Dabrowski. The second paper contained a number of highly disturbing data on the social effects of drunkenness and alcoholism: we drink and we drink more and more, at an ever increasing rate. We drink nearly seven times as much as before the war and almost three times as much as a decade ago. Estimates suggest that 2 millions, mostly men of working age, are habitual heavy drinkers. Teenagers drink and they drink to excess. The report of the Society to Fight Alcoholism had this to say: "The research conducted by the Society and by the Institute for Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy indicates that 50 per cent in the 14 year old group drink alcohol, and 80 per cent in the 15 to 18 age group. Among those still at school at that age the number drinking 100 grammes of vodka at one time grew eight times during the decade 1962–72."
>
> What about drinking at work, disorderly behaviour when drunk and crime? "Over 800,000 are drunk every day. Every day 400,000 are detained by the police until they have sobered up. Between 1964 and 1975 the number of those detained increased by 205 per cent. There were over 200,000 charges of disorderly behaviour in the last year, 90 per cent of those caused by drinking. The number of persons under age among the detained is increasing rapidly. It is estimated that 70,000 drink alcohol at their place of work every day. Production losses caused by drinking are estimated to be between 10 billion and 20 billion a year.
>
> Between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of road accidents last year were caused by drink. Over the year, more than 300,000 drivers were under the influence of drink while driving."

The situation is alarming and the measures taken so far to fight alcoholism are quite inadequate. This is confirmed by the latest official figures published in *Slowo Powszechne* (9 February 1980):

> The intake of pure alcohol is now about 9·5 litres per head of population per year. Five million Poles drink in excess, one million have to be classified as alcoholics and half a million require hospital treatment. 40 per cent of all alcohol consumed is drunk at the place of work.

Whatever social problems socialism is supposed to have cured, alcoholism is not one of them. Or, as a Warsaw wit put it: "Between the stage of advanced socialism and the stage of full communism there is the intermediate stage known as progressive alcoholism."

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Figures of alcoholic consumption according to the Central Office of Statistics and a study conducted by Professor A. Swiecicki, a member of the official Committee to Fight Alcoholism (*Polityka* 8 July 1978)

Consumption of alcohol per person per annum (in litres)

Year	*vodka*	*wine*	*beer*	*pure alcohol* (100%)
1957	7·1	3·6	20·1	4·1
1967	7·5	4·7	27·7	4·6
1977	14·4	9·1	33·9	8·2

According to the estimate in the weekly *Kierunki* of 27 January 1980 the rate of consumption has risen to 8·6 litres of pure alcohol per head of the population.

Doctor M. Tolkarz compares pre-war drinking habits with the present situation in *Problemy Alkoholizmu* No. 1, 1980:

> In the boom years 1928 and 1929 the consumption of pure alcohol in Poland stood at 1·6 litres per person per annum. It fell during the depression by 57 per cent and in 1932 it stood at 0·7 litres while the sugar consumption fell only by 24 per cent. As the depression receded, the living standards went up again and with them alcoholic consumption which reached 1·3 litres per head in 1938.
>
> Since the war drinking has grown at an ever increasing rate and by 1977 it was *12 times* that of 1932. Even the current economic difficulties have not slowed down the rate of growth which, in 1976 alone, amounted to 0·9 litres per head i.e. the annual increase was greater than the total consumption in 1932.

Professor Swiecicki estimates that 4 million adult males are habitual heavy drinkers i.e. drink at least 10 litres of vodka per month and a half a litre at a time. The "average" drinkers add up to a figure of around 6 million. According to estimates over 3 million are drunk every day, having drunk at least half a litre of vodka.

The following are figures of the state monopoly production of 100 per cent pure alcohol, taken from Annual of Statistics (*Rocznik Statystyczny*) for, respectively, 1975 and 1978:

1974	102,000,000 litres
1977	150,000,000 litres

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The Gag and the Word

Stanislaw Baranczak

The Bandit, the Victim and the Inconsistent Metaphor

We know such scenes from thrillers: a gangster robs a bank, terrorizes his victims then gags them. Gags may range from primitive, household rags, to elegant, adhesive tape. The aim, however, is always the same —to stifle the screams of the attacked, to prevent him from alerting others to his plight. Sometimes the victim's cries would anyway be inaudible to anyone outside; still the gag is used. Then one suspects that the gangster is more concerned with creating a peaceful atmosphere, untroubled by the screams of his victim. But whatever his reasons for using a gag, the act remains brutal and unpleasant. We feel instinctive sympathy for the attacked. Not only is he coerced into submission and deprived of the right to call for help, he is also denied the comfort which accompanies the expression of pain.

It is not surprising that the gag has become a universal metaphor for the fate of literature in totalitarian countries.

But explanation is required. The metaphor of gagging, despite its expressive eloquence, does not correspond completely to reality. It is true that in a totalitarian state the apparatus in control of culture resembles a gangster stuffing a dirty rag down the mouth of literature, lest any untamed words awaken outside observers and violate the peace of the oppressor. But certain details complicate the picture. First of all, the state is a clever gangster. He realizes that his victim will not long tolerate a gag in his mouth. He may choke—especially if the robbery goes on for decades. And murder, for various reasons, cannot be contemplated. So now and then the gag is loosened or removed (but only for a short time). The victim gasps for air and screams—not too loudly; he is already weakened—and the gag is again applied.

Secondly, an observer of the literature of totalitarian countries may notice something which undermines our entire scenario. In totalitarian countries literature overpowers and gags *itself*. A peculiar sight —a victim who freely silences himself. The metaphor becomes clear only when we learn that behind this apparently free action stands a constraint more complex than physical force, a constraint motivated by fear, pettiness, greed, and the desire for a career and distinction. A complex system of terrors, baits, lies and sophistic rationalizations induces the writer to tame his own words. This demeaning position has one advantage. If a writer gags himself, he can also, at the appropriate time, remove the gag himself.

Here I would recall the curious history of Polish literature in the 1970s: how in an unprecedented stage in its development Polish

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literature, previously tamed by fear and pettiness, removed its own gag. While it does not yet speak in self-assured tones, while it has not quite regained full control of its tongue, it nevertheless speaks (" traces of a gag remain on the tongue " as was noted by Jerzy Lec some time ago). And there is hope that it will learn to speak with an ever more confident voice.

A Bit of Prehistory

Many factors both internal and external to literature influence its development in a given language. The cultural policies of a state form only one set of factors. But in a country like Poland this is a rather important one. Perhaps none of the changes in Polish literature in the last 35 years can be explained *exclusively* in terms of these policies, but I think that few of these transformations can be understood *without* reference to them.

In order to arrive at the essence of the transformations in the Polish literature of the 1970s, one needs to sketch a short history of the state's cultural policies since the time of its officially termed " regained independence," i.e. since the establishment in 1944 of a communist dictatorship on the rubble of a country destroyed by war.

Though this dictatorship immediately affected political and economic areas, its effects on the cultural domain were not felt for a number of years. Exaggerating slightly, one might even say that the years 1944–48 constituted a period of relative cultural pluralism. In the literary domain the authorities tolerated the existence of a small number of private publishing houses. While journals did not represent the entire spectrum of opinions in Polish society, some of them (those owing their power to their association with the Catholic Church which had always exerted a strong influence in Poland) were formally independent of the state and often expressed polemical opinions directed against official propaganda. In those years even literature was affected by an atmosphere which fostered artistic ferment and the discussion of different world outlooks. The poetic and prosaic debuts of Tadeusz Rozewicz and Tadeusz Borowski (to mention the two most acclaimed events) signalled experimentations in search of literary forms appropriate for the expression of the nightmare of the war. Writers of the middle and older generations—those who had endured the war at home and those who had returned from abroad—published works which confronted their pre-war ideas with their experience of the war and with post-war reality. The effects of such confrontations were varied. Opinions ranged from the conservative defence of traditional values to ultra-leftist postulates. The latter were promulgated by the group of writers associated with the journal *Kuznica* (Forge), and by an even more radical group of younger poets called *pryszczaci*—" the pimply ones." Even in these initial years, there were constraints on the freedom of speech of the opposition. Premium was placed, and support given, to publica-

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tions which were ready to foster state propaganda. But differences of political opinions were not eliminated, and an atmosphere of discussion and even ideological struggle somehow continued.

The drastic changes which occurred—almost overnight—early in 1949 were directly related to political events. These were the strengthening of the one-party dictatorship following the dissolution of the sole opposition party, the Polish Peasant Party, and the " unification " of the Polish Workers Party (i.e. the Communist Party) with the Polish Socialist Party to form the ruling Polish United Workers Party. These political changes occurred in December 1948. In January 1949 uniformity was also imposed on literature. For it was then that the Polish Writers' Union Congress took place, officially proclaiming " socialist realism " as the only admissible direction for literary activity. Anyone who opposed this direction or " deviated " from it was stigmatized and subjected to restrictions and, as one might expect, repressions. Writers' consciences were subjected to harsh pressures. One could either fall silent, " write for one's desk drawer " (an option few chose), or condemn one's previous writing and publish works written in the socialist realist style. Czeslaw Milosz, in *The Captive Mind*, penetratingly described the socio-psychological mechanisms which directed most writers to opt for the last alternative. Literature was thus dominated by agitational poetry, by novels and drama focused on " production " themes, and by dogmatic criticism. Such works were sometimes created from authentic conviction that they were needed by " the masses," but more often from conformism or cowardice. In any event, from a literary perspective they were invariably sterile, boring and primitive. Even in the works of the most distinguished writers, the " socialist realist " period produced an astonishing decline they would prefer not to mention today.

Nevertheless, this period in the history of Polish literature has not been forgotten. Its notoriety, in fact, is disproportionate to the length of its duration. For the dictatorship of " socialist realism " was, fortunately, short-lived. In 1953 Stalin died, and in the following year cautious and measured attempts to criticize the premises and social consequences of Stalinism appeared. (Here one may recall the short stories by Jerzy Andrzejewski and Maria Dabrowska.) 1955 was a year of growing dissent among writers. One symbol of this dissent was Adam Wazyk's famous *Poem for Adults* a poetic critique of the cant underlying Stalinism. 1956, the year of Khrushchev's revelations, of the Polish October and the Hungarian events, marked the beginning of the great " thaw," and is the date of the general break with the literary uniformity of " socialist realism." Creativity, repressed in the preceding years, now flourished. This growth was fostered by the abrupt opening of Polish culture to the West as well as to its own traditions. In the following few years bookstores were flooded with a wave of translations, and with the first post-war reprints of previously banned

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Polish writers (e.g. S. I. Witkiewicz, W. Gombrowicz, and B. Schulz, among others). Writers who contributed to socialist realism during the Stalinist years now rejected their earlier works and criticized the "errors and deviations" of the previous period. Literary debuts were more frequent and included those of writers, no longer so young, who had written "for their desk drawer" during the preceding decade. Each week of the memorable year 1956 brought new discoveries, new literary sensations. In poetry, this was the year of the great explosion of new talents (the poetic debuts of Zbigniew Herbert, Miron Bialoszewski, Stanislaw Grochowiak, and Jerzy Harasymowicz, among others). And in prose there was no shortage of significant and sometimes shocking writings (witness the "black" literature of Marek Hlasko and others).

From today's perspective, one feature of this renaissance is particularly striking. It was primarily an aesthetic restoration, a revolution in artistic consciousness: the monopoly of "socialist realism" was replaced by a plethora of individual and authentic styles and poetic forms. It would, however, be difficult to say that the monopoly of Stalinism was replaced by a great variety of political positions and world outlooks. In the general intellectual atmosphere of the period—not only in literature but also in philosophy, social sciences, and journalism—one position was generally dominant. This was the so-called "revisionism," a revising of communism from within Marxist positions, an attempt at a democratization of the system from within, without a rejection of its fundamental principles.

It was, perhaps, the ambivalent character of these ideological postulates which prevented intellectuals from successfully counteracting the new freezing of the cultural atmosphere. This freeze, which signalled the end of the "thaw" and was effected by the authorities imposing increasingly harsher policies, did not occur abruptly as in 1949, but imperceptibly, step by step. Gradually the controversial cultural journals, which had sprung up in large numbers around 1956, closed or merged. (In particular, the closing of a courageous weekly *Po prostu*, which caused protest demonstrations in Warsaw, became a *cause célèbre*.) The controls imposed by censorship increased, restricting, step by step, the literature of "settling scores," a literature critical of the ruling system and its anomalies. By 1958, when on the political level the remnants of the October reforms were removed, it became clear that the party-state authorities were aiming at limiting the freedom of literary expression. Their approach was, however, different from that of 1949–55. This time no one was restraining *avant-garde* or "formalist" tendencies. The apparatus in control of culture did not suppress, in the Stalinist manner, artistic experimentation and the search for forms. Rather, its aim was to suppress the "revisionist" tendencies in literary thought concerning affairs of politics, history or society.

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This new control was not immediately perceived by writers as a real threat. It was not until 1964 that the famous "Letter of 34" was written; and this was not just a protest against censorship, but also against the state's deliberate restrictions of paper allotments for the publication of books and journals. This demonstration, though timid and partial in scope, was very important. Since the start of the counter-campaign against those who signed the "Letter of 34," writers realized that Polish literature was again developing under abnormal conditions. The culmination of that realization coincided with public statements by writers in March 1968 when a provocation—the imposition of a ban on Warsaw performances of the masterpiece of Polish Romantic drama, *Forefathers' Eve* (because of its supposedly anti-Russian nuances)—resulted in a direct confrontation between the state and literature (as well as between students and intellectuals). In this confrontation literature suffered a significant loss. The most active participants in the writers' protest were punished by restrictions or prohibitions. Some of them were slandered with impunity by the government press. And some authors of Jewish origin were forced to emigrate. But in the long run, March 1968 brought some good as well as evil to literature. In the first place, it signalled the end of "revisionist" illusions and marked the final crystallization of the liberal and democratic consciousness of writers' opposition to the system. In March 1968 the system revealed its true face. And since March 1968 writers have fewer dreams of improving the system from within. It is only a slight oversimplification to say that since then Polish writers have been divided into those who are supporters of the system, who derive advantages from it, or adversaries who see clearly that a normal existence for literature in a totalitarian state is impossible. It is not accidental that there are many more outstanding writers among the latter.

The 1960s: "Our Small Stabilization"

Literature's entry onto new paths of thought bore fruit in the form of a significant revival, a stirring forth from a dead point. But the results of the March 1968 rout weighed heavily on the cultural atmosphere of 1968–70, i.e. the last years of Gomulka's rule. And while the seeds of the revival were sown in March 1968, they did not bear fruit until the 1970s. Generally speaking, the 1960s were a period of stagnation. It is true that in the years prior to 1968 many valuable and outstanding books appeared. But it is significant that their authors were, almost without exception, older writers or belated debutants from *circa* 1956. On the other hand, writers who entered the literary market in the 1960s after the discreet suppression by the authorities of the ferment of "settling scores," wrote as if in a vacuum. Increasing censorship control prompted the appearance of a peculiar "self-censorship" in the consciousness of the average literary novice, automatically disposing him towards avoidance of controversial subjects

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and opinions. On the other hand, the early 1960s lived in the illusion of the post-October " restoration." And in that period one could have received the misleading impression that social order, calmness, and general acceptance of imposed conditions prevailed. It may have seemed that society, which only recently had undergone the tremors of war and Stalinism, desired nothing more than to be left alone. This period of illusion was named after the subtitle of one of Rozewicz's plays " our small stabilization." But the events of March 1968 and of December 1970 proved that this apparent stabilization was a minefield of social tensions which were only waiting to explode.

Prior to 1968 stagnation persisted in literature. One commonly heard about a crisis and lack of new initiatives. The prose of younger authors was dominated by a current which the critics dubbed " small realism." This meant restricting one's viewpoint to the surface of reality, a focusing of attention on particular details of native custom. In poetry, an apparently opposite tendency dominated: a departure towards abstract classicism, eternal use of allegory, aestheticism and pathos. These, however, were two sides of exactly the same phenomenon, an escape from the problems of the here and now. Younger authors created art which was polite, tame, and harmful to no one. Of course, such works were read by practically no one. What aroused most interest in the 1960s were the poems and plays of Ernest Bryll—a poet who in fact could be counted as part of the October generation, but who only gained significant renown in the period of " small stabilization." It did represent, at least, something new. Bryll amazed his readers with his bitter vision of Polish history, progressing from spurt to spurt, from defeat to defeat, from illusion to illusion. He portrayed a type of Pole created by this history: a man distrustful of high ideals, reluctant to sacrifice himself, concentrating on " organizing his life " on a material level in the midst of a dangerous and uncertain world, and yet simultaneously cherishing in the depths of his heart the heroic national mythology. Bryll's work—particularly his drama *Rzecz Listopadowa* (" The November Cause "), full of allusions to the great Polish Romantics—unquestionably satisfied a certain social need. But the more observant critics soon noticed that, despite appearances, this was also a product of " our small stabilization." It was a literature which pleasantly titillated the reader by reminding him of national traditions and myths, but which also constituted a dangerous justification of the general apathy and passivity.

Among the few truly unique and authentic literary events of the 1960s, it is perhaps worth mentioning the poetic programme of Jaroslaw Marek Rymkiewicz. Following in the path of T. S. Eliot, this poet attempted to create a consistent neo-classicism derived from convictions about the unity of European culture and the far-reaching role of art based on older models. This programme was intellectually rich and ambitious, but as some of his critics pointed out, it led no-

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where. The classicist defence of unity and the eternal character of culture was tantamount to a Romantic-conservative critique of contemporary culture, to a withdrawal from the complicated world of today's everyday routine.

But the 1960s, we should stress, were not a completely sterile period. It is sufficient to note the outstanding writers of that decade, poets such as: Slonimski, Iwaszkiewicz, Jastrun, Przybos, Wazyk, Rozewicz, Symborska, Miedzyrzecki, Woroszylski, Slucki, Karpowicz, Nowak, Wirpsza, Herbert, Bialoszewski, Grochowiak; and prose writers such as: Andrzejewski, Parnicki, Buczkowski, Szczepanski, Kusniewicz, Kijowski, Nowakowski, Wojdowski, and Terlecki. But these were writers who, almost without exception, were moulded by the preceding period—by the inter-war years, by the war, or by the first post-war decade, or, at latest, by the period of the October crisis. Secondly, even their outstanding work is overshadowed, albeit at times consciously, by the veil of self-censorship. It neglects certain themes; it frequently locates the plot abroad or in past epochs (a plethora of historical novels and works concerning the Second World War); and, if it treats the present at all, it does so by means of allegories, allusions, and vague hints. It would, of course, be difficult to consider every case as an expression of escapism. In a literature which is functioning normally there is a place for aesthetic poems, " detached from life," for science fiction, and for a novel or two about the Merovingian dynasty. The point, however, is that the dynamics of Polish literature has been and remains far from normal. It did not even satisfactorily fulfil the basic task of literary work, to give expression to the problems of one's own epoch and society. The gag left its traces not only on the tongue, but on the choice of literary genre, subject, and problems. It is most ironical that in the 1960s writers who had most to say about the contemporary affairs of their country, e.g. Milosz, Gombrowicz, Wierzynski, and Herling-Grudzinski, were émigré authors.

The 1970s: Short Thaw and Long Frost

In the history of Polish literary life which I have thus far sketched one can detect a certain regularity. In a country such as the Polish People's Republic the relations between culture and state arrange themselves into a stable pattern. After the period of " frost " there is a sudden " thaw," which then chills again into a gradually sharpening frost. After a period when a gag has to be endured, its abrupt removal creates the possibility of speaking at full voice. But this freedom is short-lived; it is increasingly suppressed in the laborious process of refastening the gag.

The 1970s apparently mirror this pattern faithfully. Like the " October thaw " of 1956 and its sequel, Gierek's ascent to power was followed by a " post-December thaw " which spanned the years 1971–73. This thaw lasted for a much shorter time and was much more

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limited in scope. In 1972 writers could not even dream of publishing ideas as advanced as those found in the literary journals of 1957 and 1958. Beginning in 1974, an ever more chilling frost hardened from year to year and plunged to its lowest temperatures (thus far!) in 1979–80.

Analogies between particular stages may be significant, but for Polish literature the 1970s are a unique and unprecedented period.

What does the difference consist in? There are a number of differences. We have already noted the first: the 1970s marks a new phase in the *consciousness* of Polish literature. After the dismal experience of March 1968 and the tragedy of December 1970, it is difficult to preserve any vestige of faith in the possibility of improving the system from within. A significant number of writers, and a decisive majority of those in the forefront, is ever more frequently assuming a dissident stance. Writers more frequently stand at the side of those social forces which do not await the grace of the authorities, but force those authorities to concessions by applying a pressure of their own. This shift was not clear in the early 1970s. The then relatively liberal behaviour of the power apparatus and a short period of improvement in the socio-economic situation provided no incentives for immediate resistance. But since 1974, the tension between the governing apparatus and the cultural world has grown visibly and writers have emphatically demonstrated their stand. Many of them signed petitions to the authorities—among them the best known, "Letter of the 59"—protesting against the planned changes in the constitution and demanding the introduction of basic civil rights in Poland. The June 1976 events attracted many writers to the side of the opposition. Since that time, it has been difficult to believe seriously in the good will of the authorities, and more generally, to believe in the possibility of reforming a system founded on coercion and deceit.

The second difference is one of perception. I have already mentioned that the literary debutants of 1956 were more concerned with a vision of literature than with a vision of the world. At the threshold of the 1970s there appeared a new generation of writers to whom questions of world outlook seemed as important as those concerning the inner workings of literature. These writers were prepared from the start to question official ideology. Born in the mid-1940s, their biographies coincide with the post-war history of Poland. And their generation's most important experience was the student protest of March 1968, in which most had participated. This writer himself belongs to that generation and is, perhaps, inclined to overestimate its significance. But looking at the problem objectively, the role of "the generation of 1968" seems essential to the 1970s. First of all, it was the young authors who launched the attack against the indecisiveness, ambivalence, and marasmus of the literature of the 1960s. In 1971 *Nieufni i Zadufani* ("The Distrustful and Self-involved") by Stanislaw Baran-

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czak appeared. This was a critical work attacking cynicism and postulating scepticism and intellectual honesty as literature's necessary attitude towards a mummified and false official ideology. Three years later Julian Kornhauser's and Adam Zagajewski's notable *Swiat nie przedstawiony* ("The World not Represented") advocated a return to concrete reality and "straightforward" speaking, without the veils, allusions, and vague hints which characterized "older" literature. At the same time, the work of other representatives of this generation, e.g. Ryszard Krynicki, Jacek Bierezin, and Ewa Lipska, marked a general shift towards the concrete ethical and social themes of everyday life in the Polish People's Republic. This literature took up the polemic with the corrupted language and twisted mentality of the ordinary citizen in a totalitarian country. It did not avoid controversial subjects, even though this meant confrontation with censorship. It is significant that a similar shift was also apparent in the works of older authors, a shift which can be attributed only in part to a desire to keep in step with the young. The decisive influence must be attributed to a reality which stimulated writers' consciences ever more strongly to resistance.

Finally, there is the third difference. In previous periods, as in the early 1970s, the manoeuvrability of opposition literature was constrained by what publishing possibilities were opened to it by the state. Since 1949, the state had a monopoly in supplying literature to the home reader. After 1956, this monopoly was broken by a few publishers who gained partial independence from the state. These, however, were subject to censorship, arbitrary decisions concerning the number of copies permitted, and restricted paper allotments. To all intents and purposes, writers during the years 1949–76 had an opportunity to address themselves to the home reader only insofar as the state allowed them. So for the literature of that period it was of prime importance whether the government administered a thaw or a freeze, a loosening or a tightening of the screw, a momentary removal or a refastening of the gag.

1976 brought radical changes in this state of affairs. Literature was enriched by a new literary circuit entirely independent of party-state licence and the eye of the censor. Nothing comparable had ever taken place before. It is true that attempts at *samizdat* had occurred earlier, but they were of a rather private nature and limited by their scope to particular events. But since 1976 we have had in Poland a publishing network which attempts to be a conscious, consistent, and permanent alternative to the official, monopolized, and state-controlled circuit of literary publications. Its technical base is extremely modest (the reader abroad rarely realizes that in countries of the Eastern bloc, despite their fine-sounding constitutions and laws, possession of the simplest mimeograph is in practice illegal). But we can take pride in the fact that unofficial magazines and books published beyond the reach of

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censorship have as their authors and editors writers who constitute the forefront of contemporary Polish culture. I once had occasion to compare our contemporary culture to a building consisting of an ornamental and pompous "official" facade, and an "unofficial" and amateurishly constructed "backside." It is a feature characteristic particularly of the second half of the 1970s that these initially unsightly backsides have emerged taller than the facade. They in fact determine the character of the entire building.

But how did this come about? One has to note that the birth of this unofficial, uncensored circuit of literature was, in a certain sense, "caused" by the authorities themselves. The gag was applied too violently and too painfully. Literature simply had to rid itself of the gag. Let us recall a few facts of recent history. After the protests against the planned changes in the constitution in 1975–76, protests in which an exceptional number of writers took part, the authorities resorted to a drastic method of personal prohibitions, a method which had previously been abandoned. The censors received a list of a few dozen authors whose works were not allowed to be published and whose names could not be mentioned. In practice, this meant a recommendation to censor anything that a writer wrote and anything that was written about him, from the schedules of publishing houses, the press, radio, and television. Almost simultaneously, and beginning with the June events of 1976, censorship control of all publications increased conspicuously. A Cracow censor, who a year later escaped to Sweden carrying with him a set of the secret instructions issued by the Office for Control of the Press, revealed to the world that in the preceding few years it had been practically forbidden in Poland to publish anything truly essential to society.

But these restrictions achieved a result quite contrary to their aim. In the autumn of 1976, an independent and uncensored press appeared in Poland. This press first published in the form of bulletins copied on ordinary typewriters and primitive mimeograph machines. It grew at an astonishing rate (currently numbering about 40 titles), and it soon assumed a form resembling that of ordinary magazines, improving its technical base and specializing in its subject matter. Publishing houses were created to publish "forbidden" books. These latter publications and two literary quarterlies, *Zapis* and *Puls* are especially important. *Zapis*, whose first issue appeared in the winter of 1977, created a fundamentally new alternative for writers. A writer is no longer condemned to writing "for his desk drawer" or to publishing in an émigré publishing house. If his book is rejected for censorship reasons, an author may publish it (in only a slightly smaller number of copies) in an independent publishing house. The number of writers who have completely rid themselves of self-censorship by removing the last traces of the gag from their mouths and writing directly for the unofficial press is increasing.

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Poetry: Moralism, Irony, and " Worditis "

To say that literature and literary life are mutually dependent is a commonplace. But this banality has assumed a peculiar interest in recent Polish literature. The restrictions and progressive sterilization of creativity gave rise, perhaps as a self-defensive mechanism, to the new, extra-official forms of literary life. These in turn, by liberating literature from its artificial, external taboos and prohibitions, directed literature to rethink its own internal philosophical and stylistic problems and programmes. This, of course, is not to suggest that everything valuable in our literature was created only within the last few years or exclusively within the framework of the unofficial publishing network. On the contrary, the majority of titles I have and will discuss appeared in the form of state publications. And the fact that they appeared at all is due either to the short period of the " small thaw " in 1971–73, to the peculiar immunity enjoyed by the most distinguished writers, to the individual efforts and courage of particular editors, or finally to the everyday and banal oversights of the censors. None of this undermines the thesis that the birth of an unofficial literary circuit created a fundamentally new situation, a possibility for full freedom of expression hitherto unknown which has now to be taken into consideration in the plans of both authors and state publishers, not to mention official cultural bodies.

Let us try to sketch the most general outline of what constituted the transformations in the Polish poetry and prose of this period. Here I will not discuss drama, for, with the exception of Mrozek who currently resides in the West, the 1970s ushered in an era of stagnation in Polish drama. Instead, we will start with the question: what new elements have the 1970s brought to Polish poetry?

It would be difficult to attribute the development of each of poetry's most distinguished representatives to the political, social, and cultural vicissitudes of post-war Poland. Tadeusz Rozewicz, for instance, devoted himself to penetrating the chaos of contemporary civilization, and the hell of biological instincts. Tadeusz Nowak, in the same period, continued to write his cycle of " Psalms "—poems which fuse the folk-Christian, fable tradition and the experience of uprooted twentieth century man. Stanislaw Grochowiak became increasingly hermetic in his " Parnassian poetry " whose heritage, paradoxically, could be traced to Grochowiak's youthful cult of ugliness, the banal, and the grotesque. The same may be said of a great many comparable and lesser poets: they followed along their own individual paths.

Nevertheless, in Polish poetry what is most original, most specific, and most profoundly in tune with the problems of the epoch was, despite individual differences, subjected to certain far-reaching changes in the 1970s.

In the first place, one may note that the last few years of our lyric poetry marks the period of invasion of poetic *moralization*. I need not

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add that I do not have in mind cheap moralization, didacticism or the dispensing of this or that kind of instruction by means of versed form. I am more concerned with a receptiveness to ethical problems whose complexity is demonstrated in the course of each and every workday in a country like Poland. A strong moralistic current has been present in our poetry at least since the last war, but it appears that dramatic events such as those of March 1968, December 1970, and June 1976 directed even the most apolitical of poets to see and understand this subject matter anew. Questions of responsibility, choice, free will, determinism, honour and common decency, altruism and conformism, the individual's natural autonomy and his gregarious existence in a uniform society—in short, the entire range of ethical problems—are questions which each citizen of a totalitarian country must solve for daily application (provided he is still in a position to think independently). This situation provides an inexhaustible mine of topics for literature and poetry, whose individualism, inherent in its vision of the world, instinctively rebels against that which interdicts and constrains the individual, and whose active relation to language constitutes a ground for opposition to the totalitarian "newspeak." Certainly the latter was on the mind of Antoni Slonimski, the grand old man of Polish poetry (1895–1976) when, at the end of the 1960s, he described the peculiar "Country of the Word's Antipodes," in which

> . . . our simplest words
> Have misleading meanings, as do those Antipodes
> Who walk heads down, carrying their feet upwards.

From this point of view, Zbigniew Herbert's *Mr Cogito* (1974) is a particularly salient collection of poems, united by the character of the protagonist. Herbert was always a moralist: but his ethical dilemmas prior to *Mr Cogito* were never rooted in contemporary reality. For Mr Cogito is the contemporary Everyman: an intellectual, but at the same time a reader of tabloids; an obedient citizen but occasionally an individual in revolt; an observer of contemporary fads and fashions, but also a defender of traditional values. Independent thinking is his mark of distinction. That distinction is expressed symbolically by his Cartesian surname. But it is also expressed in that the protagonist, in successive poems, becomes dramatically and painfully conscious of his own spiritual situation: the dissolution of individual identity and a general blurring of the criteria of good and evil. Mr. Cogito, simultaneously alone and stripped of his own identity, longs for a tragic situation, one in which it would be necessary for him to choose between clearly defined values. The contemporary world offers him few opportunities for such a choice: values have been falsified and prostituted, and heroism appears inaccessible to the average man. And yet the volume ends with an urgent call to heroism, to restoring true meanings to words, and to individual responsibility:

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repeat the grand words repeat them with obstinacy
as those who had gone across the desert and perished in the sand
they will reward you for it with what they have at hand
whipping with laughter homicide in a garbage dump
go for only this way will you be received among the company of cold skulls
among the company of your forefathers: Gilgamesh Hector Roland
those protectors of the borderless kingdom and of the city of ashes
Be faithful Go

The discussion of ethical problems on the level of concrete individuals was the chief feature of the poetic moralization of the 1970s. The same analysis can be applied to the recent phase in the work of the most significant of living women poets, Wislama Szymborska. Her excellent volume *Wielka liczba* ("Big Number," 1976) constitutes a defence of human "particularity" against the "big numbers" of mass cultures and ideologies. These subtle, ironic poems invoke certain fundamental, if currently unpopular truths in today's world of terrorism, dictatorship and political "pragmatism," truths about the indisposable value of human life, the human right to free choice and the dangers of mass utopias.

Wiktor Woroszylski, born in the 1920s as were Herbert and Szymborska, fits into this current of poetic moralization. Nonetheless, Woroszylski commands a singular place among the poets of today's middle-aged generation. He underwent a complicated and dramatic development from youthful illusions (as an 18 to 20-year-old youth he was one of the most active "pimply" Stalinists), through a disenchantment with communist ideology in 1956 (as a correspondent he was an eyewitness to the bloodshed resulting from the suppression of the Hungarian revolution), to a lively participation in the activities of the democratic opposition. His poetry volumes of the 1970s are arranged in a sequence, which is significant as regards the manner of their publication. *Zaglada gatunkow* ("Extermination of Species," 1970) was printed in a state publishing house. *Po zagladzie* ("After Extermination," 1974) was published in a semi-official, low-circulation bibliophile series, and the last volume—*Jestes* ("You Are," 1978)—was printed by the independent publishing house NOWA free from censorship. The fundamental theme in Woroszylski's poetry is the relationship between the individual and history: the suggestion that history, which most often appears to us as an anonymous and blind force, in point of fact is determined by the behaviour, decisions and choices each one of us makes. Totalitarian systems, writes Woroszylski in poems such as *Panstwa faszystowskie* ("Fascist states") or *Akt oskarzenia* ("Bill of indictment"), have always relied upon the silent majority, upon those who in the name of their own peace of mind

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renounce the simplest moral impulses. But the fact that humanity emerged from the cataclysms of our age with faith in the dignity of man is due to the uncompromising individuals who, if only by powerless gestures, manifested their allegiance to human values. Woroszylski sees the recent period in Poland as a historical moment in which the defence of these values (perhaps doomed to defeat) has become synonymous for many with preserving their dignity and inner freedom:

> In the hardening swamp
> of our daily dead war
> in this grip in this camp
> I've never been so free before
> . . .
> From under the eclipse from under the covering
> the bright face of life again will shine
> for everything turns into liberty
> that we have touched at such a time.

There is in the above fragment, as in Herbert's poem, a justifiable pathos: but pathos is in fact a rare phenomenon in today's moralizing current. What is common to a great many otherwise dissimilar poets of the 1970s is *irony*. Perhaps one may see in this a reaction against the pompous and pretentious, fundamentally false language of official propaganda. Poetry, as a way of speaking and seeing the world, is at the opposite pole to propaganda. It avoids pathos and big words, resorting to them only in exceptional cases. Instead, irony became its weapon, but an irony which does not preclude gravity. This poetic stance neither entails a dangerous reserve nor eludes responsibility by means of mockery. Rather, it is a peculiar mode of criticizing various forms of "false consciousness." It appears to take seriously the premises of false consciousness, only to criticize them through confrontation with the real laws governing the human world. Herbert, for instance, presents traditional mythological or biblical motifs by transposing them into contemporary reality and thereby demonstrating their inapplicability to our twentieth century experiences. But there are nearly as many methods of using irony as there are poets who use it. Consider the lyric poetry of Artur Miedzyrzecki, whose poetic debut took place during the war, but who appears to have just recently reached the height of his potential (witnessed by his excellent volume *Wygnanie do rymu* "Exile to Rhyme," 1977). The fundamental theme of Miedzyrzecki's poetry is the "exile" of the contemporary artist, and his impossibility of identifying with any system of religion, ideology or tradition which previously might have offered support. In this situation "magical irony," as Miedzyrzecki called it, remains the only weapon left to the artist. It is a stance which, contrary to appearances, is in today's world closer to heroism than buffoonery.

The use of irony as a method of critique also plays a central role

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for the poets of " the generation of 68." It is curious that poets who seemingly stand apart from " generation " tendencies and are focused almost exclusively on analysing their own existential obsessions (I have in mind the work of Rafal Wojtaczek, who died tragically in 1971) make use of irony. But irony for this generation is most typically used as a tool which mercilessly bares the shallowness and falsities of a social consciousness moulded by the mass media and broken of the habit of independent thinking for whole decades. In spite of individual differences a common feature can be observed in the work of the poets Julian Kornhauser, Ryszard Krynicki, Adam Zagajewski and Stanislaw Baranczak. These poets frequently use the " other's word," a manner which reveals the poetic structure of speeches, newspaper announcements, posters, official communiqués, protocols, etc. Their aim is to exhibit a certain style of thinking, and to demonstrate by poetic measures the falsities and dangers inherent in it.

We have touched directly upon yet another peculiar feature in the poetry of the 1970s, which for lack of a better term I would call " worditis " (*slowiarstwo*). This neologism was coined by the inter-war *avant-garde* poet Julian Przybos, and was meant to signify a conscious relation to language, " work in words " understood as the fundamental task of the poet. In Polish lyric poetry since the 1920s to the present there exists a current which the critics call " linguistic," which is distinct in that it makes language its primary subject matter. In the linguistic poetry of the 1960s a division appeared which rested upon the differing views, positive for some and critical for others, of the *possibilities* of language. Poets such as Przybos were inebriated with the unlimited power of the word in poetry, with the unlimited possibilities of creating new meanings. On the other hand poets such as Miron Bialoszewski, Tymoteusz Karpowicz, Witold Wirpsza, and Edward Balcerzan, put premium on the opposite side of the question: the deficiency of language, its internal inconsistency, and the misunderstandings and adulterations potentially present in it. This led to the type of " worditis " which demonstrated concrete abuses of language in a social dimension, and more particularly to those characteristic of " newspeak." The poetry of " the generation of 68 " concerned itself with this problem, taking up a polemical dialogue with the forms of official speech and the colloquial awareness it moulded. It is immensely curious that the turn towards " worditis " was also present in the work of many older poets (Woroszylski, Jerzy Ficowski and others), who apparently became aware of the menacing dimensions of the destructive power of the word when cynically used by the helmsmen of mass consciousness. Was not March 1968 in this case a particularly decisive experience? One may say that in a situation where a system of organized lies distorts even the fundamental meaning of words, the poetry of the 1970s chooses one of two alternatives: either it " repeats grand words with obstinacy " (Herbert), trying to recall their true

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meanings, or—as advocated by "worditis" poets—it tries to imbue its readers with a stance of mental independence and critical distrust towards any attempts at rhetoric.

Prose: Contemporary Subject Matter, Great Metaphor, Grotesque

In 1970 I had occasion to review the newest and most noteworthy prose work published in that year. I considered five of them: books by Miron Bialoszewski, Jacek Bochenski, Leopold Buczkowski, Artur Miedzyrzecki and Witold Wirpsza. One may argue whether they were the best of 1970: nonetheless, they seemed to me to be the most interesting, bringing new material into Polish prose. From today's perspective one is struck by one feature: none of these books was, in the common sense of the word, "realistic." Each was devoted to extensive narrative experimentation. None of them located the plot in contemporary Poland. Bialoszewski wrote an unconventional diary from the period of the Warsaw Uprising; Bochenski—a novel about Ovid; Buczkowski—a complicated anti-novel, based simultaneously in the years of the First and Second World War. Miedzyrzecki wrote a satirical portrait of a fictitious artist and thinker living in the West, and Wirpsza—a pseudo-thriller novel whose plot was situated in an indeterminate country and epoch.

Such was indeed the prose production of the 1960s. This statement is not intended to sound like an accusation against the authors mentioned: on the contrary, even today I appreciate the literary experiment in their books and the fact that they were able to, in a paradoxical sense, say more about contemporary reality than the deceitful novels by third-rate authors, which pretended to be "realistic" but were in fact only fulfilling party orders. There was, however, also something symbolic in that everything that was most ambitious and most valuable in the 1960s tended either towards the pole of Parnicki (the creator of a new formula for historical novels) or towards the pole of Lem (the creator of a new formula for science-fiction novels). There was nothing in between, nothing about contemporary life, nothing about how millions of Poles really lived. "Realism," as I already mentioned, was represented by authors who either focused on marginal themes (e.g. the problem of changes in the countryside, while relatively safe, was taken up an infinite number of times), or construed schematic fictional visions which had less to do with reality than with the wishes of the state-party patron (an example is the genre of so-called "work novels" which were slightly modified, but essentially unchanged versions of the "production novels" discredited in the Stalinist years). More ambitious authors tried to smuggle in truth about reality, e.g. underneath historical costume, in the form of timeless parable, by situating the plot in another country or moving it into the future.

The 1970s have not yet seen as clear a change in Polish prose as in

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poetry. Prose inevitably reacts to changes of perceptions with a certain delay. (As I continue my discussion I will have to refer repeatedly to examples of novels as yet unpublished and circulating in manuscript form.) In countries such as Poland prose always meets with more censorship resistance than poetry: the reason is its mass appeal and the ease of its reception. Let us just quote one, very characteristic example: the prohibition by the censorship of Jerzy Andrzejewski's novel *Miazga* (" Pulp ") has now lasted over 10 years. Those who have read it in manuscript (the general public knows only a long fragment published in 1966 in one of the literary journals) claim that the novel, written in a mosaic-like technique, constitutes one of the most important artistic testimonies to our contemporary reality. Without paying heed to the rank of the novel or to the stature of the author himself—Andrzejewski is one of the most popular contemporary prose writers—censorship has made the unabridged publication of *Miazga* impossible, while at the same time allowing Andrzejewski to reprint older works or publish a novel on a biblical theme. One hears that in the near future *Miazga* is scheduled to appear in a publishing house active outside of censorship's control.

The beginning of the 1970s was not, then, as clear a threshold for prose as it was for poetry. And yet the last few years show that important transformations were also being prepared in prose. The most important of these transformations was the shift towards contemporary issues. The 1960s ushered in a crisis of allusion and allegory. These mediated ways of speaking about contemporary problems finally tired readers, critics (as was witnessed by their reactions to the books of Kornhauser and Zagajewski, mentioned above), and the authors themselves. Books such as *Msza za miasto Arras* (" Mass for the City of Arras," 1971) by Andrzej Szczypiorski are received less enthusiastically—precisely because the allusory tendency shows only too obtrusively underneath its historical costume. It is true that novels that are " historical, with reference to the contemporary world," continue to appear. But the only ones among them that are successful are those in which the historical background is more than a vehicle for easy allusions and the " reference to the contemporary " reaches beneath the surface. Some examples are the books by Jacek Bochenski (e.g. his unpublished novel on Tiberius) and Julian Stryjkowski. The latter is admired by readers and critics for his excellent novels, recapturing the world of old Jewish culture (in the 1970s he published *Sen Azrila*—" The Dream of Asril "—1975, and *Przybysz z Narbony*—" Visitor from Narbona "—1978). *Visitor from Narbona* is an example of a skilful combination of a historical theme (the plot is situated in the Spain of a few centuries ago and concerns the persecution of Jews by the Inquisition), with profoundly understood problems of the contemporary world. The protagonist, young Ely, who wishes to inspire the Jewish community to armed action, meets unforeseen difficulties.

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Terror and collective guilt have already effected an internal decay in an apparently homogeneous social structure. The scale of positions now ranges from heroism through conformity to treason. Where does the necessity of struggle for survival end? And where does vileness begin? Where is the line to be drawn between faith and fanaticism? Is self-deceit, which sustains the threatened community, better than the truth which internally divides the community? Is one allowed to fight terror and hatred with the same weapon? Can one demand heroism from a terrorized society? These are only some of the questions which are raised by this novel. They are questions which are essential not only to the past (Stryjkowski dedicated his book to the Warsaw Ghetto insurgents), but also to the immediate present.

Following such attempts—which are no longer disguises masking superficial allusions—the interest in directly contemporaneous themes increases ever more strongly. This is represented in a variety of ways. Thus, the most recent books by Miron Białoszewski, an excellent poet who in the 1970s tended towards narrative prose, relate stories which appear to be trivial, accidental, written down as they happen from day to day. These stories remain, as it were, outside the threshold of literature, yet they convey an unusually concrete and revealing image of the life of a typical inhabitant in contemporary Poland. They reproduce the shoddiness, makeshift and defective nature of our reality. The short story art of Marek Nowakowski tends towards capturing the mechanics of the behaviour of an average man, determined by the jungle laws of the social structures which surround him. The novel by Aleksander Orlos, *Cudowna melina* (" Wonderful Hideaway," published in an émigré publishing house) depicts a cross-section of life in a provincial village somewhere in Poland, governed absolutely by the local party-police mafia. *Literatura* (" Literature "), a novel by Wiktor Woroszylski, also published in the West, reflects upon the place of a writer in the shifting network of social tensions characteristic of post-war Poland. Finally, to mention the younger writers, there is Adam Zagajewski's novel *Cieplo, zimno* (" Hot, Cold "), a kind of *Erziehungsroman* of today, describing the development of a young man in the Polish People's Republic, from his youthful rebellions and inner conflicts towards later conformism.

With all this the prose of the 1970s is perfectly aware of the dangers of " small realism," which contents itself with surface observation of events, no matter how detailed. It seems that all the writers listed above managed to escape that danger. In their work one can see a tendency towards the great metaphor which, concise though this description of reality may be, invests the description with a power of generalization and accomplishes a displacement of the centre of gravity from analysis towards synthesis. A paramount example of this is perhaps the creative development of Marek Nowakowski, since his literary debut in 1958. For some time Nowakowski was considered a

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specialist in the subject matter of the so-called " social fringe," of the world of small-time thieves, hooligans and urban riff-raff. His novels from that period were excellent, yet they always restricted themselves to a narrow slice of reality. In the 1970s Nowakowski tends towards a synthesis, whose climax is his " long short story " entitled *Wesele raz jeszcze* (" Wedding Once Again "), in which he depicts a cross-section of Polish society, personified by a rather poorly matched company of guests at a wedding. Kazimierz Brandys arrived at his synthesis along a different route. In previous years he was often criticized for not devoting more space in his novels to home realities, and accused of only echoing the ideological debates of the West. Brandys answered these, first by his excellent novel *Wariacje pocztowe* (" Postal Variations," 1972), set in the form of letters written by representatives of successive generations of one Polish family in the course of three centuries. This was a startling and brilliant narrative frame, allowing a condensed representation of dissensions and quarrels which nourished Polish society from the pre-partition days until today. Most recently, Brandys published (this time in an émigré publishing house and, almost simultaneously, in a Polish publishing house independent of censorship) a short novel entitled *Nierzeczwistosc* (" Unreality "). This novel was also written in an unusual form (it consists of a series of replies to the questionnaire of a Western sociologist, tape-recorded by the protagonist—a Polish intellectual). It again aims at a synthesis, which is not curtailed by censorship considerations. The great metaphor in this novel by Brandys is that of the title " unreality." In this shorthand way the author defines the specific nature of Polish social awareness, forced by historical circumstances to manufacture group myths and hypnoses, existing in the unreal world of its own illusions and imaginings.

It is significant that in its pursuit of synthesis and in its emphasis on subject matter, the Polish prose of recent years has often moved towards the essay form. This, in any case, is true of that wing represented most clearly in Brandys's novel, and in the works of writers such as Andrzejewski, Bochenski, Jan Jozef Szczepanski (the author of a collection of penetrating moral essays, *Przed nieznanym trybunalem*—" In Front of an Unknown Tribunal "—the literary event of 1975) and Andrzej Kijowski (who in the 1970s seemingly gave up his novel writing, for equally excellent essay writing). The opposite wing is represented by those writers who attempt to derive their " great metaphor " from the plot itself. Here another feature is characteristic. These writers often resort to the *grotesque* in their interpretation of reality. Even such realistic and naturalistic works as the previously mentioned Orlos novel are not free of satirico-grotesque elements. Here again Nowakowski may serve as an example of a distinctive evolution. The more intensive his tendency towards a synthetic approach, the stronger is his propensity towards the grotesque. In

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stories such as *Zdarzenie w miasteczku* ("Incident in the Village"; a story of the rebellion and escape of inmates from an old people's home) or *Kiedy ranne wstaja zorze* ("When the Dawn Arises"; a mushroom-gathering country excursion organized by a business institution ends with a collective drinking bout and general airing of hidden grudges) the grotesque plot has elements from both Kafka and Gogol, while at the same time remaining very Polish. The use of the grotesque in the literature of countries such as Poland paradoxically reflects a need for realism. One cannot write otherwise about a reality which itself is grotesque.

The novel which, as a fusion and an apogee of all the tendencies mentioned above, can be taken as a symbol of the prose of the late 1970s, is Tadeusz Konwicki's *Kompleks polski* ("Polish Complex"). While it may not be the best novel of this period, it is the most original and the most characteristic. Konwicki planned initially on publishing it "normally," in one of the state publishing houses. As an extremely popular author he could expect both the publisher and the censor to turn a blind eye to the many accusatory and satirical nuances. But when the publisher immediately demanded deletions and retouching (the year was 1977, and thus a period of significant intensity as regards the censors' alertness), Konwicki gave up the idea of official publication and published the book in the extra-censorship circuit, as issue No. 3 of the quarterly *Zapis* (Konwicki's novel *Mala apokalipsa*—"Minor Apocalypse"—has appeared as issue No. 10 of this same quarterly).

The great metaphor of *Kompleks polski* appears on the first page of the novel. The narrator, the author himself, stands as 23rd in a long queue in front of a state jewellery shop. This is, in spite of appearances, a scene more realistic than grotesque. Gold is a highly valued commodity in a contemporary Poland touched by rapidly advancing inflation. The waiting for merchandise (cheap Soviet rings) drags on, and in a queue which contains a cross-section of society, social acquaintances as well as sympathies and antipathies form. The queue is a reflection of the natural state of being, with a worker, a student, an undercover policeman and a wealthy proprietress of a private business. The class differences and opposing viewpoints play a decidedly smaller role here than the problem of attaining a better place in the queue. Next to the author-narrator stands his would-be assassin, a man who immediately after the war was ordered by the anti-communist underground to liquidate the author. Behind the man stands an ex-agent of the Stalinist police, a man who once imprisoned and tortured the would-be assassin. These old tragedies, however, have been forgotten. Everyone is united in a common feeling of nonsense and impotence. The only thing which still counts is the acquisition of scarce material goods.

The contemporary motif of the novel constitutes only one of its

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layers. Another layer consists of lengthy digressions, separate short stories included in the course of the narration which refer chiefly to a defeat in one of the many spurts of liberation in Polish history—the 1863 uprising. Apparently they bear no relation to the main line of the plot. In essence they demonstrate how deep are the changes in Polish social consciousness in the last few decades; how the contemporary citizen of a socialist state has become alienated from the ethics of duty, and the conviction of the absolute necessity of defending individual and national liberty, even if this defence were doomed to defeat. The conclusions of Konwicki's novel are bitter, as bitter as the social diagnoses put forth by most of the outstanding literary works of the 1970s. But this bitterness and this acuity of approach also leave room for hope. Indeed, they are themselves an element of that hope.

Get Rid of the Gag—and What Next?

One who manages to remove a gag can easily choke on his own words. The possibility of speaking at full voice can be easily transformed into an intemperate outcry. These dangers certainly threaten every literature which at some point rids itself of the remnants of inhibitions and limitations imposed by censorship. This is particularly relevant in a situation in which only a part of literature, the part which is most ambitious, most courageous, and most conscious of its social obligations, secures for itself this freedom. It may happen then that literature attempts to say too much too fast, doing harm to its own artistic mission.

In practice this danger may manifest itself in two forms: the first is a tendency towards a popular style, towards tendentiousness, and one-sided treatment of political themes. The second danger is particularism, the abandoning of universal problems for the sake of questions essential only to that particular part of the world, and to that particular nation.

The first of the two phenomena seems to be a sort of childhood disease, through which a literature on its way towards freedom inevitably has to pass. It is a question of individual talent whether a writer is able to recuperate quickly from that illness. It appears that the more distinguished representatives of Polish literature in the 1970s have already left behind the traps of a popular style and of tendentiousness, and some may have avoided them altogether. On the whole our writers realize that it makes no sense to fight totalitarianism with its own weapons, that it makes no sense for them to write journalistic agitprop. All the more so in a situation where the thinking part of society has already been well aware for a long time, thanks to independent publishing activities, social sciences, etc., of what constitutes the evil of the prevailing system. In these circumstances literature may, and should, devote itself to performing its own tasks, which, after all, no one else will fulfil.

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What are these tasks? The answer to this question will at the same time be a commentary on the second of the dangers previously mentioned. It seems to me that literature's focus on events taking place here and now represents not so much the danger of particularism, as paradoxically, a great opportunity of taking hold of a universally important subject; perhaps the most important one for our epoch. This opportunity arises from the fact that our area of the world—by this I mean Eastern Europe, and Poland in particular—constitutes at the present time something of an unintentional experimental field, where the outcome of questions crucial for the whole of mankind is being decided. Of what sort of behaviour is man capable under conditions of changing intensity of pressures? What constitutes his true nature: the drive towards freedom or " escape from freedom "? How do his values, his ethical principles change? In what ways can man adapt himself to the inhuman world and why, despite everything, can he sometimes take it no longer? These are only a few of the questions which literature faces in our part of the world and in our epoch.

Translated by Dan Rivers

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Polish Literature Today: the Perils of Fragmentation

Ryszard Kowalski

FOR at least two hundred years Polish literature has been much more public in its concerns and appeal than have the literatures of other European countries. It has been so traditionally because during the time when Poland was partitioned among Russia, Prussia and Austria (1795–1918), literature had to take over the functions of non-existent or persecuted national institutions and keep the idea of "Polishness" alive. Nowadays, this inherited tendency is paradoxically strengthened by the fact that, within a system where almost everything belongs to the state and the state itself is run by the Party, literature remains an individual, personal enterprise. A poet or a novelist does not write in the name of a party cell or a governmental office (both programmed from above) but in his own name; he chooses his own subject and his own style. Therefore he is, potentially, a spokesman for all those who have been denied the possibility of freely expressing their opinions and longings. Thus in view of the artificiality, conformity and resulting sterility of official communal life what is still private and personal takes on a public role.

Writers in Poland form a more homogeneous group than do their Western colleagues. There is no chasm between authors of bestsellers and authors of volumes of verse published in a few hundred copies, one reason being that an author gets less, and not more, money for each subsequent edition. (Of course, writers of popular fiction tend to make more money than poets or essayists, but the gap is narrower than in the West.) There are no novelists or poets-in-residence, as in the USA, no writer-academics. However, the literary milieu is dominated socially by "serious" writers; they are the unquestioned spokesmen of the whole writing community. They are also the bearers of a traditional charisma, the tacitly recognized representatives of the national conscience.

From time to time some Party hack complains of the role played by the literary "café," that is, by the unofficial opinion of the literary circles. Such complaints, derisive as they may sound, have a solid factual basis. The writers who "collaborate" with the regime, who faithfully follow the official line, are not only a minority, but a minority which is looked down on and knows it. The opinion of the milieu as a whole exerts a restraining influence on most of its members and makes those who side with the authorities against their own confrères feel uneasy. A fairly recent scene in the Actors' Club in Warsaw illustrates the point. A Party journalist known for his ruthlessness in criticizing anybody who happens to be out of favour, slightly drunk, stares at a writer known

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for his independent views and finally blurts out: "I know, you think I am a swine—but it is not as simple as that!"

The situation may seem to have all the makings of an enviable state of affairs. Every good new novel, volume of poetry, or collection of short stories has an excellent chance of being sold out in a matter of days if not hours (selling from 2,000 to 10,000 copies in the case of poetry, from 10,000 to 50,000 in the case of prose). Literary periodicals are read avidly, with, for example, the high-brow monthly *Tworczosc* almost impossible to buy in spite of its circulation of 7,000. Organizationally, Polish writers have maintained a remarkable degree of independence from the Party and state authorities. Those who fall foul of the censorship or sign letters of protest against governmental abuses are not prosecuted: at worst, they would be refused passports, but they do not lose their rights as members of the Writers' Union (which include free medical care and retirement pensions).* If they cannot publish officially they can fairly easily have their books hectographed by underground "presses" or printed abroad.

There is no lack of talent. To mention just a few names: the doyen of Polish writers, 85-year-old Jaroslaw Iwaszkiewicz, who still produces remarkable short stories and poetry; Stanislaw Lem, one of the world's best known authors of science fiction, who also writes "normal" fiction and philosophical essays; the poets Zbigniew Herbert, winner of many international awards, and Tadeusz Rozewicz, also of international repute; Jan Josef Szczepanski, novelist, short story writer and essayist, highly respected as a moral authority; the young Stanislaw Baranczak, critic and author of brilliant political verse. We have to add to these some of the leading Polish writers who live abroad: Czeslaw Milosz, one of the best contemporary poets; Gustaw Herling-Grudzinski, essayist and the author of *A World Apart,* an excellent book about the gulags published 30 years before Solzhenitsyn's books; Slawomir Mrozek, writer of brilliant comedies of ideas; Leszek Kolakowski, philosopher and essayist. All these mentioned would occupy pride of place in any of the world's leading literatures.

BUT with all this talent, with all the attention it receives and the respect it commands, Polish literature today gives cause for deep concern and worry. It is a literature increasingly fragmented; its contact with readers is growing erratic; it is not expanding its appeal and is slipping in its traditional function of being a culturally integrating force. Its very success in fighting the sterility of communist dogma is producing difficulties with which it has not yet learned how to cope.

The very fact that it is, in practice, a literature divided by international frontiers—divided much more sharply than it was during the time Poland was partitioned—is troubling. With the exception of Mrozek, who lives

* The situation of young writers who are not yet members of the Union is often much worse: they may lose their jobs or be blocked from joining the Union.

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in Paris but whose works are staged in Poland, the works of Polish émigré writers are banned in their native country and can only be smuggled in from abroad. This causes their works to circulate only in small numbers and within the cultural elite. Thus they cannot shape the habits and perceptions of a broader public.

The main cause, however, of the increasing fragmentation of both literature and the reading public in Poland is more complex and requires a longer commentary.

In theory, literature in a socialist country ought to be "socialist" as well: it should concentrate on such subjects as the class war, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the change in consciousness and in the very nature of man brought about by the transformation of his socio-economic environment, the struggle against imperialism, and so on. It ought to be basically "realistic," that is, bearing formal resemblance to the traditional nineteenth century fiction of a Balzac or a Tolstoy. It should also openly support the educational and political initiatives of the Party. This is the ideal Soviet model, followed fairly strictly in most other communist countries. But in Poland such "orthodox" literature, which could be called "official" in the sense of adhering to the ideological guidelines of the Party, forms only a tiny margin. A second margin, at the opposite end of the spectrum, is made up of literature which is in open rebellion against the prevailing system; most of it can, of course, circulate only clandestinely.

The main body of Polish writers tended to ignore the demands and pressures of official ideology without flaunting their dissent, and have thus managed to preserve the possibility of open, even if limited, access to readers. They did not defy the censors but either fooled them or, more typically, gave them sufficient excuse to look the other way (as when they dressed up Stalinist terror as the Inquisition). Their attitude reflected the mood of the population: while muting their discontent, Poles would meet the official ideology with a shrug and a yawn.

But now this central majority of writers, resistant but not rebellious, is coming apart. Fewer are willing to seek a compromise with censorship, more are ready to speak out openly, irrespective of the consequences, some have fallen silent, some are simply lying low. What are the reasons for this change of attitude? The simplest explanation, that increased government constraints have evoked a more fearful reaction, does not quite tally with the facts. Official demands have not grown more exacting but rather more desultory. If at the time of Gomulka (1956–70) writers felt themselves under pressure, now they feel that they are treading a slime of official hypocrisy and indifference. Gone is the cultural subtlety and snobbery of old Party leaders; the new secretaries could not give a damn about culture. They are interested in what pays and what entertains, diverts attention, befuddles and stupefies the public. There is a constant shortage of paper for serious publications, but no lack of it for comic periodicals (which are, by the way, not very popular because

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they are stuffed with propaganda). Students cannot buy books which are on their reading lists; the collected works of Mickiewicz and other national classics are unavailable, while the Party's old war horses, such as Jerzy Putrament and Stanislaw Ryszard Dobrowolski have been rewarded with multi-volume collected editions which remain largely unsold.

The years 1948–56 (years of great social mobility, both horizontal and vertical) saw severe restrictions on all contacts with the West, the condemnation of all artistic experimentation and the banning not only of pornography but also of thrillers and virtually all "light" literature. Yet the paradoxical by-product of the official cultural policy of that period was an unprecedented increase in the popularity of serious literature. (The policy was later gradually relaxed, but its side-effects lasted longer than their causes.) Everybody who wanted to read and did not like reading the horrid products of socialist realism had to read the classics. There was not much new literature being published, and since many writers—those who did not acquiesce and write according to Party recipes—turned translators, the principal classics of European and American literature were then made available in Polish. And these years of enforced reading of Defoe, Fielding, Stendhal, Dickens, Thackeray and Tolstoy had prepared the public for other masters, who followed after the "thaw" of 1956–57. Thus in the 1960s we had the phenomenon of not only Thomas Mann and Proust and Joyce but also Faulkner and Musil being sold in tens of thousands of copies to readers in almost all spheres of Polish society. This continuous expansion over more than a decade of a high-brow readership and cultural elite has, however, in recent years begun to deflate, and the beneficial consequences are going to waste. Polish literature, Polish culture in general, is becoming increasingly polarized between the elite and the masses.

AWARENESS of this socio-cultural crisis has certainly contributed to the restlessness of Polish intellectuals. But the main cause of unease seems to be the consciousness that the entire fabric of Polish culture is being corroded by the prolonged rule of cant and the ensuing moral disorder.

All official life, everything that is spoken or written or otherwise transmitted by state-controlled media, is under the sway of cant. Whether it deals with ideology or economy or history, current events or future prospects, the relations between various communist parties or the local cost of living—everything is immersed in hypocrisy. Virtually nobody, in his official capacity, is interested in what is the case, but only in what can be fabricated out of something, by no matter what means of distortion and manipulation. This rule of cant is in a way more pernicious than outright suppression of thought because it blurs edges and dissolves everything in a grey shapelessness.

Preventive literary censorship, the main instrument of the rule of

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cant, is, by itself, a cause of cultural disintegration. Although it directly concerns only the authors, its stultifying results affect the public which, feeling constantly cheated and not getting what it is most interested in, grows jaded and indifferent.

The full effects of censorship are impossible to estimate. Nobody will ever know how many books were not written, not even begun, because their prospective authors did not feel optimistic enough, or did not have enough time and money to write without a prospect of immediate publication. During the 35 years of its activity (not regulated by law!) the censorship has mutilated innumerable books and prevented many from being published at all. Thus, for instance, *A Horsehair Ring*, probably the best novel about the Warsaw uprising of August 1944 and the communist take-over in 1944–45, written some 20 years ago, has never been published; nor has a documentary volume about the *cichociemni*, the legendary paratroopers dropped into occupied Poland by the RAF. Many such works, some historical, some fictional, are circulating in a few copies or lie hidden in their authors' drawers. And their absence is almost palpable: the void caused by the lack of works on certain themes, historical and contemporary, philosophical and moral, is only too evident. There are hundreds of books about the Second World War, but nothing about the partitioning of Poland in 1939 or the Nazi-Soviet cooperation; nothing about the trials of the 1950s, when many members of the anti-German resistance were accused and executed for "collaborating" with the Gestapo; nothing about the Party's policy of quashing every independent social and ideological initiative; nothing about the corrupting pressure on the young to join the Party to make their careers easier, and so on. And what use is it if the writer—in fact one of the most brilliant minds in Poland—using the pseudonym of Tomasz Stalinski has published a few fascinating political novels in Paris, when they are available only to the very select few in Poland?

The instructions which the censors (who have to approve everything distributed in more than 19 copies) receive from the Central Committee's department of propaganda are very detailed, but they are not to be applied mechanically. It matters not only *what* is written, but also *who* has written it. As Czeslaw Milosz put it some 25 years ago in one of his poems: "Do not evaluate any words before clerks check // In their files who has said these words." Thus when the USA was celebrating its bicentennial, only the journalists and writers figuring on a secret list drawn up by the Party authorities were allowed to publish articles about the anniversary. The same applied to the visit of Pope John Paul II in June 1979, with the difference that, in this case, Catholic periodicals were the only ones permitted to give the visit full coverage.

This "personalization" of censorship works in various ways. Some writers are permitted more because they are trusted Party members, others because they are well known and can serve as evidence of the state's "liberalism." For example, none of the members of the Com-

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mittee for Social Self-Defence, KOR, is allowed to publish anything (at least under his own name), with the exception of Jerzy Andrzejewski who has ostentatiously been given a weekly column in the magazine *Literatura*.

The rule that some writers are more equal than others sometimes has bizarre consequences. Ernest Bryll, a poet of the middle generation, is perhaps the most glaring example. He is a Party member, a former diplomat, a TV personality, and in general a "dispositional" man, probably the highest compliment the Party can pay its members below the Politburo level. He is also the author of the most caustic poems about the moral debasement of those who follow the allurements of power, privilege and official career. Written usually in the first person plural, these poems abound in images of gore and excrement, of rottenness and decay. They are more vivid and devastating than anything written and clandestinely published by the regime's detractors, but they have been brought out by a state publishing house. Probably nobody else would have been allowed to have these poems printed; Bryll was, but it did not help his reputation within liberal circles. On the contrary: his latest and most bitter volume, *Zwierzatko* ("A Little Animal") was sharply criticized, mostly in underground magazines, not because of what his poems say, but because of the cynicism and false posturing which seem to follow from a juxtaposition of their content with the author's public behaviour.

There are many instances of the censors' evaluative dualism: on the one hand Wiktor Woroszylski, a former Stalinist poet and now a leading member of the intellectual opposition, is not allowed to publish his biography of . . . Pushkin; on the other, Halina Auderska's novels *Babie lato* "Indian Summer" and *Ptasie goscince* "Birds' Highways," representing the first large-scale fictional attempt to tell the story of Poles forcibly resettled after the last war from the former eastern to the present western borderlands of Poland, were coolly received by critics because of her shameless flirtation with the authorities.

The authorities condone pornography, if it flows from the pen of their staunch supporter, Wojciech Zukrowski. They are willing to tolerate any formal experimentation, providing the author behaves quietly and leaves topical issues alone. The Party has given up hope of having the majority of writers commit themselves to its ideology and interests; as second best, it would like writers to focus their attention on the proverbial "birds and flowers," that is, on ornaments and trivialities. It thus wants writers to create *against* the expectations and demands of their public. Various forms of literary escapism are a consequence; this may make readers' tastes more sophisticated, but it also limits the numbers of readers.

The imposition of a communist regime on Poland halted or vitiated all natural, organic social processes, and replaced them by changes

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planned from above and introduced with ruthless perseverance. The whole pattern of society has altered, but even if one considers some of the changes beneficial, everybody must be aware of the resulting artificiality of social relations and of the structure of society. Official ideology has increased this feeling of artificiality by its insistence on the dogmatic and arbitrary descriptive formulae.

This means that a young writer in Poland is faced with a social reality which he feels, if only intuitively, to be unnatural and constrained, and with an ideology which presents this reality in glaringly inadequate terms. The most common reaction in recent years seems to have been to turn to fiction which is half folkloristic and half fantastic, saturated by the grotesque. For several years it was fashionable to write about the peasantry, the only social class in Poland which has not been entirely displaced; and particularly to write in a semi-mythological way, as exemplified by the poetry and prose of Tadeusz Nowak. But fairly soon it became evident that any greater infusion of realism and current topicality runs the risk of being suppressed by the censors: the Polish peasant has won his battle against enforced collectivization, but remains the object of enormous political and economic pressures, applied more or less deviously by the Party which has never relinquished its ideal of "socialized agriculture."

A city rogue, a petty thief or a swindler, a pimp or a drunkard, a vagabond coming from nowhere and going nowhere in particular: such figures from the fringes of society make their appearance, for they are much safer literary heroes. First and foremost, they are unquestionably *authentic*. The social fringe is the preserve of authenticity. In "socialist" literatures it has attracted the attention of many writers, from Ilya Ehrenburg to Venedikt Yerofeev to Marek Nowakowski in Poland. But while the first two steep their realistic observations in the grotesque, Nowakowski, a determined and talented realist, wants to describe the authentic fringe as a part of an unauthentic whole: consequently, he finds himself in frequent trouble with the censors. Many of his younger confrères try to avoid this fate by writing witty and whimsical prose with action taking place in a never-never land oddly reminiscent of Poland, a prose sufficiently clever to assuage their consciences and sufficiently abstract to make it tolerated, and rather boring.

THE most important development of the last three years has certainly been the unprecedented growth of underground publications, both literary and political. So many pamphlets, periodicals and books keep appearing that it is becoming impossible to keep track of all of them. They are the most visible symptom of the development of an open opposition to the communist regime.

The best literary periodicals, such as *Zapis* and *Puls* (the former is reprinted in London), publish pieces by several leading Polish writers. But thus far this underground literature has not produced anything

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sensational. The artistic and intellectual level of the non-censored magazines (the circulation of which is usually between a few hundred and a couple of thousand copies) is no higher than that of the better "normal" publications, of, for instance, the Catholic monthlies *Znak* and *Wiez*. It has turned out that the opportunity to speak out without restraint is just that and nothing more: it neither gives access to fresh facts, nor imparts an ability to see through the blanket of fog which covers our whole national existence, nor bestows a revealing and integrating vision. Nor, of course, does it add anything to a writer's talent.

It is possibly because so many of the writers publishing in the "unofficial" periodicals belong to the middle generation, the generation which entered literature at the time of Stalinism, that the subject of the recent past is so frequently taken up. Rather disappointingly, though: the dominant motive seems to be not so much an impulse to analyse rationally what happened, or what made so many gifted and intelligent people collaborate with a cruel and imposed regime, and embrace a preposterously rigid ideology, but self-pity. Thus for instance Tadeusz Konwicki, one of the most talented of these writers who years ago in his *Sennik wspolczesny* "A Contemporary Dreambook" gave a fascinating and moving picture of the recurrent "dreams" which obsess a member of the Polish intelligentsia, writes about his Party past and anti-Party present in the tones of an autobiographical lament.

Egocentrism, usually mournful, is the most crippling weakness of much of the "underground" literature. Understandably, because, honest and courageous as this literature may be, it is a literature deprived of normal contact with its public. It is also a literature without critics: if there is literary criticism in the underground publications, it is directed outwards, to "official" literature. To criticize one's "own" authors is considered rather shocking. Such conditions may give rise to great individual works, but not to a healthy literature.

Only poetry, the most immediate of literary forms, seems to have profited from new opportunities. But even here one cannot be sure how much more the new, outspoken poems of Baranczak, Jacek Bierezin or Ryszard Krynicki convey to their readers than, for instance, the poetry of Ewa Lipska, who expresses her moral concerns in more circumspect ways.

The main accomplishment of the "clandestine" literature is that it has raised the stakes, has made the standards of sincerity and commitment more exacting. But the main responsibility, artistic, moral and political, still rests with the central majority of writers. They have to maintain the contact with a broader public. New means of bypassing censorship, new ways of establishing communications with readers and earning their trust have yet to be found.

The Polish writer of today faces his task overburdened by the consciousness of both fact and form. The revelations of Solzhenitsyn are

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old hat for him: books about Soviet labour camps were published in Poland well before the last war. He has thorough experience of the workings of a totalitarianism of a different stripe. At the same time, he has absorbed the lessons of the modern masters, from Joyce to Faulkner, to Butor, Beckett, Pynchon. He faces the present condition of his country, tossed as it is by powerful national and moral frustrations, aware that he is expected to perform his traditional duties, which are to compensate for the lack of public liberties, to express unarticulated attitudes, to integrate suppressed longings. He knows that expectations are high and his duty enormously difficult because contemporary literature is conventionally private-oriented, not public-minded, its contents mainly psychological, not ideological; while what Polish readers want is a public-minded literature, one which raises political, historical and social problems.

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Film: Lenin's Favourite Art

Boleslaw Sulik

AT the main entrance to the Polish Feature Film Studios in Lodz a large board proclaims that " Film is the most important of all the arts—Lenin." Probably only foreign visitors ever read this. The locals have developed an amazing capacity for ignoring the ever present political slogans. They blend with the surroundings, no more noticeable than paving-stones; unless a camera is pointed at them to bring them out again.

Of course Lenin's banal dictum goes back more than half a century to the heroic days of the Soviet cinema, the cinema of Eisenstein, Pudovkin, Dovzhenko and Dziga-Vertov. The internal political battles these remarkable film-makers fought for creative freedom, the hard-won triumphs and frequent defeats suffered, sometimes—as under Stalin—through direct intervention at the highest state level, are under-researched, half-forgotten or ignored. What remains is the intoxicating legend about revolutionary propaganda which became a great art as well as a powerful instrument of social engineering.

From a distance the exhortations seem not to have changed, but one should not be deceived by the aggressive rhetoric of the public statements of policy, or the tone of press comments. In Poland, at any rate the ruling party's policy towards film-making has for some 20 years been dominated by mainly defensive considerations. It is as if Lenin's assertion was reflected back and read in reverse, producing a curious official belief in the awesome power of the visual medium, in its dynamic capacity to reveal to the millions unpalatable social truths. Ostensible demand for contemporary films of social import have in practice been countered by moves to contain the film-makers' response to the contemporary social scene. Expensive literary adaptations and costume films have often been preferred. Not only are they fairly popular with the audiences, but by occupying a great deal of studio space and drawing on the film industry's limited resources, they help to keep the politically risky ventures out without any need for direct intervention.

We are, of course, principally concerned here with feature films produced for theatrical distribution. At this point it is proper to remember that creative freedom in this field is restricted everywhere, under any political system, inside or outside the Soviet bloc. Film-making of this sort is an activity which is both industrial and creative, necessitating a heavy monetary investment with uncertain returns. Whoever supplies the capital—an agency of the state, or a privately owned company—is likely to insist on a measure of control over how and to what end the money is spent. Thus a conflict between creative freedom and

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political or commercial control could be said to be inherent in the nature of the medium. Pressures to conform, commercial or political in origin, vulnerability to forces of censorship, institutionalized or not, instability for the creative practitioners in the medium, in recent years compounded by the ever thinner edge between success and failure, are a common phenomenon. Creatively ambitious film-making, East or West, means walking a political or a commercial tightrope.

Yet it is also true that such comparisons are misleading. The parallels are too distant and too general to be illuminating. The structure of the Polish film industry, its motivating force, the political context in which it has to operate and the external relationships of power which can affect film-makers in direct ways, belong to a very different and unfamiliar world.

THE broad structural features of the Feature Film Industry in Poland were established in 1956 and have shown remarkable resilience in surviving a series of crises and attempts at wholesale reform. The structure is based on a cluster of semi-independent producers' cooperatives, known as "Film Authors' Units." At present there are eight such production units in existence. Each is headed by an Artistic Director—in most cases a distinguished film-maker—assisted by a Literary Director in charge of scripts and a permanent Production Manager for the unit. In theory each unit is free to develop a separate artistic programme and to attract individual film-makers sympathetic to its aims. A unit is allocated annually sufficient funds to commission or buy film treatments and to cover its administrative costs. A script backed by the unit is submitted to a Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts with special responsibilities for the Cinema (currently Mr Antoni Juniewicz), who considers with his advisers whether to accept the project or reject it. If and when the script goes through (sometimes changes are requested and "dubious" passages pointed out), the unit's production manager costs the film and submits the budget through the office acting for all the "Film Authors' Units." With the budget approved, the state bank credits the money and the project goes into production.

"Film Authors' Units" produce between them some 25 feature films annually designed for theatrical distribution. In the past, production units have also fed television with fiction serials and "one-off" films. This secondary outlet is now running out, because television has been developing its indigenous production, renting studio space or using its own facilities. Outside the Feature Film Industry there are also specialized centres of production, like the Warsaw Documentary Film Studio or the Educational Films in Lodz. The technical resources are inadequate and outdated—except in television—and promised new investments which include modern feature film studios to be built just outside Warsaw are slow in coming through.

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For understandable reasons pre-censorship in films plays a much greater part in controlling the content than the official state censor who has to approve the finished product before it can be seen by the Polish public. Political responsibility rests with the High Office of the Cinema, which is a department in the Ministry of Culture, and, therefore, ultimately, with the Minister himself. But, inevitably, there are other interventions, reflecting the dual political structure of the governing system, with the policy-making agencies of the party closely monitoring administrative decisions. Departments of culture and of propaganda in the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party are politically involved with the development of the national cinema, and in any disagreements between the Ministry and the relevant offices of the party, the Secretary of the Central Committee in charge of propaganda appears to have the final say. Television comes under a different branch of government, the Committee for Radio and Television, which has the status of a fully-fledged ministry and operates outside the authority of the Ministry of Culture.

Demands for close political supervision of the content shape production procedures and directly influence creative processes. The screen-play becomes the normative document, understood literally as the blueprint for the finished product. At a time when many Western film-makers prefer to work with broad story outlines, filling them out with invented, improvised detail in the course of shooting, feature production in Poland remains script-bound. Only directors who feel politically in a strong position would risk taking liberties with the approved screen-play. Young film-makers who want to follow their inclination to devise and realize projects on a "happening" principle, are soon persuaded to compromise, or are forced out of the profession.

The same political requirements make it imperative that a single person should be in charge of turning the screen-play into the finished visual work. The East European cinema has been, and still is, predominantly a director's cinema. From the moment the film goes into production, during the shooting and in the cutting room, a film director combines his primary creative function with the role of a Western producer, and with no star system to build up performers to a challenging status the director's authority is complete. He is responsible for the creative interpretation of the screen-play, he later submits a cutting copy to political scrutiny; if changes are asked for, he is obliged to make them; he supervises censor's cuts, he may defend his work—through available channels or personal contacts—from mutilation or a total ban; he, in the end, accepts laurels or risks political disgrace.

Such single authority over the entire process of production has obvious creative advantages. A Western film director, harassed, as he often is, by his producers, backers, temperamental stars and trade union requirements, may naturally feel jealous of the freedom enjoyed by his East European colleagues. Indeed, the artistic achievements of

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the Polish cinema owe not a little to the power that individual directors of talent wield within it. Fruits of this freedom would have been richer had not other checks been put in the way of film-makers' aspirations. The system puts the creative *realisateur* in charge of the entire process, but it fails to provide encouragement for creative ambition. It encourages mediocrity. In past years one of the really damaging weaknesses of the Polish cinema has been the amount of " dead wood " it was carrying. Over 50 per cent of practising directors have failed to prove their worth in either artistic or commercial terms. Out of 80 feature films completed in the period 1975–78, 40 have failed in distribution to recover more than two-fifths of production costs, and 16 have been seen by less than 100,000 people—an extraordinary statistic. And with one or two exceptions the commercial failure of such films was not caused by artistic experimentation.

Dozens of demonstrably untalented people continue to plan films and occasionally make them, ostensibly because the socialist economy guarantees employment to all graduates from the State Film School in Lodz. The deeper, underlying reason is that there is no political danger in making dull, uninspiring films. At times of tension, when social frustrations rise, any film that catches the mood of the time and communicates well with its Polish audience is politically disturbing to the ruling party. A recourse to safe and pliant mediocrity becomes a more attractive option than ambitious attempts to comment truthfully on the social realities of the day.

A POPULAR and political response to two by now famous films, Andrzej Wajda's *Man of Marble* and Krzysztof Zanussi's *Camouflage*, both produced during 1976 and released in 1977, vividly illustrates the point. *Man of Marble* took a searching look at the pioneering years of the People's Poland, confronting them with the current reality. It investigated a fictional, but disturbingly real life story of a Stakhanovite building worker, piecing it together from a variety of viewpoints. *Camouflage* probed opportunist and cynical career attitudes prevalent in Polish academic circles. Both films gained an added political edge through historical accidents. The workers' protests of June 1976 and the following wave of police repression made the already delicate subject of true working class attitudes even more sensitive; and actress Halina Mikolajska, who had a part in *Camouflage*, became in autumn 1976 politically active and joined the dissident Workers' Defence Committee, formed to assist the victims of police repression. After the initial shelving of both films, and drawn-out discussions involving personally Mr Tejchma—then the Minister of Culture and Art and until the Eighth Party Congress a full member of the Party's Political Bureau—some cuts and changes were made and a decision was taken to give *Man of Marble* and *Camouflage* a restricted showing early in 1977. Even then the two first nights were nervously

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postponed at the last moment, and the censor's dampener was put on publicity and any potentially favourable reviews. At the first sign of the *Man of Marble*'s extraordinary success with the public, the selected release was stopped. A well-informed and plausible Warsaw rumour has it that at this point Mr Gierek—the First Secretary of the Party —asked to see Andrzej Wajda's film for himself and that it was eventually more widely released on his personal authority. *Man of Marble* proved a magnetic attraction especially for the younger Polish audiences, too young to remember the birth of People's Poland. Huge all-night queues were forming outside cinemas showing Wajda's film, with black market touts reselling tickets at 20 times their original price calling out their offers: —" Only 500 zlotys for three hours of freedom."

Man of Marble and *Camouflage* proved to be the most popular Polish films of their time. But at the spring plenary session of the Central Committee a succession of crudely aggressive and clearly orchestrated attacks on both films was delivered. Speaker after speaker waded in with heavy political abuse, directed not only against the content of the films, allegedly defamatory to the People's Poland, past and present, but also against those who allowed such " slanderous " works to be produced and passed for distribution. In line with the political custom, no names were named, but the very obvious chief target was the Minister of Culture, Mr Jozef Tejchma, a " liberal " in party terms. He managed to survive the session in his job, but not for long. The films disappeared from circulation, and were refused an export licence.

There is more than one moral in this story. It shows and to some extent substantiates the almost superstitious belief of the party bosses in the power of the screen. In a country where social frustrations run as deep as they do in Poland, ambitious contemporary films—works of critical perception—can provide a reliable test of popular mood. This immediacy of the social response and its spontaneity is in itself disturbing to the more dogmatic pillars of the system, which aspires to institutionalize and control all social relationships. Films thus become a sort of substitute political phenomena, and can provide various factions within the party with an indirect political battleground. It is a curious situation. Film and television, more accessible and popular than other creative arts, act as a substitute for an open political life. They help to polarize and dramatize political attitudes, and occasionally —as in the case of *Man of Marble* and *Camouflage*—they provide a stage for indirect, spurious political confrontation.

The natural vulnerability of the profession to external forces is thus greatly increased. Talented film-makers can do nothing to prevent political misuse of their work, and very little to defend their professional standing from the effects of spurious political attack. And in the cinema there is no chance of developing a dissident counter-culture

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where one could challenge the system openly and survive as a practising, if unlicensed, artist. Yet in the final account, courage and enterprise often pay off. The story of *Man of Marble* and *Camouflage* has a happy ending. At the time when these films were attracting popular acclaim and political abuse from the party bosses, the very system of production which had given birth to them was under grave threat. A plan submitted by Mr Janusz Wilhelmi—a Deputy Minister of Culture soon to take over the reins of the Ministry from the sacked Mr Tejchma—proposed that all Film Production Units should be disbanded in favour of a heavily centralized system of production run directly from the Ministry. This prospect, on top of other pressures, seems to have done wonders for the film-makers' sense of solidarity —not normally their strongest attribute. Their resolute, concerted opposition to the plan, helped, perhaps, by the familiar chronic indecision on the part of the Polish state authorities and, finally, by a plane crash in which Mr Janusz Wilhelmi perished—led to the dropping of proposed reforms. What is more, at the subsequent General Meeting of the Polish Film-Makers' Association the party candidates were overwhelmingly defeated. Andrzej Wajda, not a party member, but internationally the most famous of Polish and—indeed— East European film-makers, was elected to the post of the President. Of his three deputies two—Krzysztof Zanussi and Krzysztof Kieslowski, film directors of proven talent and known independence of outlook— are not party members, the third, Krzysztof Winiewicz, a cameraman, is a party activist on the whole well-liked and respected by his colleagues. A situation now exists where a genuine dialogue can be carried on between the authorities and the Association representing the professional interests of its members.

Probably one minor side effect of this advance was the revoking of the export ban on *Man of Marble* and *Camouflage*. Much more importantly, the improved balance in the relationship between the film-makers and their political masters no doubt contributed to the current thriving revival of the Polish cinema, distinguished by its searching social awareness. Andrzej Wajda has followed his *Man of Marble* with the excellent *Rough Treatment,* and Krzysztof Kieslowski directed the highly praised *Amateur*. Behind the established artists the new, ascending generation has already entered the stage: Agnieszka Holland (*Provincial Actors*), Feliks Falk (*Dance Leader, A Chance*), Janusz Kijowski (*Kung Fu*), Wojciech Marczewski (*Demons*), Filip Bajon (*Aria for the Athlete*) and several others. Having overcome another crisis, the Polish cinema is suddenly displaying symptoms of rude good health.

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The Poisoned Humanities *

Bohdan Cywinski

IN order to appreciate to the full the dangers of the new wave of ideological indoctrination it is necessary to identify the main lines of attack and the substance of the ideology currently being enforced. In my view, there are four theoretically separate but interdependent lines:

1. The inculcation of Marxist views of humanity, society, culture, history, economic and social problems both past and present.
2. The "atheisation" of the mind, which involves subjecting religious beliefs and the Church's social and cultural function in the past and today to a distorting treatment.
3. The subordination of all study of historical and contemporary events to Russian and Soviet political requirements.
4. The teaching of the ideology of the Socialist Polish State as representing the only kind of Poland deserving of true patriotic feeling.

AN analysis of the textbooks and the curriculum establishes some leading propositions as well as the method of presentation in the misteaching of history and the history of literature. The teaching of history is consistently subordinated to the Marxist assumption that historical processes are determined by the conditions of production and their social consequences. In any sociological description the only factor allowed significance is the class structure. Such characteristics as nationhood, race, religion and type of culture are treated as incidental to the "understanding of the dialectics of the historical processes." Any discussion of the dynamics of society centres on the class struggle. Other conflicts are deemed to be of much less consequence (as they are less adaptable to the interpretation in terms of the "historical process"). Sources of conflict such as cultural differences, religion, dynastic claims, reasons of state, strategic and political motivations are analysed only rarely and then superficially as needless complexities in the accepted scheme of things.

All historical problems and in particular those of literary history are seen in terms of progress and reaction. Every work, every writer and every trend, whatever the period, receives marks for the degree of "progressiveness" and this classification is the principal tool of all literary criticism. Cultural phenomena are reduced to a pattern of social, and in the ultimate analysis economic, relationships. In the process, culture itself ceases to be the expression of humanity

* Excerpts from *Zatruta humanistyka. Ideologiczne deformacje w nauczaniu szkolnym w PRL* (*Biblioteka "Glosu"*).

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and any understanding of culture is removed from the young people's orbit. The history of philosophy fares perhaps worst of all disciplines under this treatment. The subject has never commanded much space in school textbooks: under the new curriculum the development of philosophy has been successfully obscured even further by the use of the "progressive" and "reactionary" categories, replaced when interpreting philosophical doctrines with "materialistic" and "idealistic." The classification does not, of course, explain anything at all but it makes it easy to allow Epicurus and the Ionian School the badge of progress while Aristotle, Plato, St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas and Kant are all bundled together as reactionaries, without any explanation of "insignificant" differences between various systems of thought.

The doctrinaire approach to history and the history of literature takes all life and interest out of the subjects. Its ideological and political effects apart, I believe that the treatment results in blunting, if not in destroying, the intellectual sensitivity and curiosity of the young. One of the main objects of teaching the humanities should be to develop the sense of wonder at the riches of human nature. The official approach, here described, is bound to obliterate the natural wish to perceive history in terms not only of achievement but, above all, of diversity. The intellectual liveliness of young minds is subjected to the stifling limitations of Marxism, now a relatively poor and also anachronistic doctrine, as the only available instrument for exploring the whole world of human achievement. The rigid ideological framework behind the new textbooks conditions the mind to be content with simplistic and superficial explanations, and to disregard the past which can never be progressive enough to satisfy the doctrine.

THE spreading of disbelief has been a constant objective since 1950 but the methods and the approach have differed throughout the period. Textbooks of the Stalinist era are full of brutal propaganda: anti-religion, anti-Church and anti-clergy. It was primitive, unconvincing and monotonous. The newer textbooks pursue the same objectives less loudly but with more guile and altogether in a more orderly and organized fashion.

The description and interpretation of religious phenomena and of related problems consistently exclude any mention of the most significant aspect, i.e. religion as an expression of man's need of God. This applies equally to religious institutions, religious behaviour and the religious inspirations behind the national culture. Religious ritual and practices are also discussed only in strictly temporal terms. This means that the young are deprived of any explanation of the substance of Christianity, even from an opposing view point. Textbooks provide short and superficial but at least comprehensive information on Greek mythology, Renaissance humanism, the Enlightenment,

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Romanticism and Positivism and above all on Marxism: but not on Christianity.

The concepts of Christianity are hardly discussed at all, attention is devoted entirely to the institutional Church. This is represented as a centralized and hierarchical organization, with its own social ideology and its own policy developed as an instrument to achieve temporal power. The Church is also credited with its own cultural model evolved to promote its ideology. The role of the Church in Polish history is presented as a part of the discussion of European history. Its historical importance is systematically minimized by means of tendentious selection and presentation of events.

The most important feature of the campaign is, as I have mentioned above, the deliberate omission of the most significant function of religion, that of expressing the individual's and society's need of God.

THE general indoctrination contained in the distorted version of the humanities as taught in our schools is accompanied by direct political propaganda embedded in the curriculum. Two main lines of propaganda are easily discernible: one of them is determined by the requirements of Soviet political strategy. The other is designed to spread the ideology of the People's Republic as a socialist Polish State.

The objectives of the Soviet grand design, translated into the Polish school curriculum, are fairly transparent: the aim is to disarm national consciousness with regard to these objectives. This is to be achieved by communicating the sense of the inexorable power of the USSR as an inevitable act of history. The Bolshevik revolution and the creation of the first communist state are presented as the climax of human progress so far. History, until now filled with class struggle, has emerged into a new era.

The fundamental convergence of the correctly understood Polish and Soviet political aims is propounded. The promise of this convergence would be discernible in the history of early Polish-Russian relations were it not for the conflict of interest between the Polish property-owning classes and the policy of tsarist Russia in the past. Polish national traditions are presented in such a manner that the elements of hostility, distrust and the sense of being menaced by Russia are eliminated. Emotional rapprochement with the USSR is promoted, as far as this is possible.

The concept of the Polish People's Republic as *the* Polish Socialist State aims at linking the patriotic instincts of the young and their sense of national pride exclusively with contemporary political reality and existing political structures: the ideas of nationhood, society, the state and socialism are to become one in the mind and if possible also in the subconscious of the school children. This is to be achieved by presenting the PPR as the only model of a

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sovereign, powerful and just Poland, which fully realizes the hopes of the past.

A view of history, particularly of modern Polish history and the history of ideas, is constructed to make the above proposition acceptable, while demonstrating conclusively that there was no alternative way to a sovereign and permanently independent Poland. The PPR is presented as a potential but already half-realized ideal of the Polish State, created and governed by a united people under the universally accepted leadership of the United Party. The relatively new and significant elements are "the universal acceptance" and the "united effort of all the people." These new slogans have dislodged the old "intensified class struggle." The elements of social cohesion and solidarity have been introduced in order to demonstrate to the school children that any alternative social or political model would only negate the essence of Polish national aspirations.

Propaganda produces its own version of this century centred firmly on the Russian revolution as a quasi-eschatological moment in world history, the realization of the Marxist vision and the crucial turning point for the human race. The interpretation of events after 1917 becomes no more than the establishing of the relation between them and the USSR. The historical distortion becomes nearly total from that date. It is worth noting that, also from that date, there appear in the textbooks significant infidelities to the universally accepted Marxist principles, whenever there is a conflict between them and the Soviet political aims. The Soviet version of events always wins and is confirmed as more important than the purity of doctrine.

To list the most glaring examples of the distortions concerning the Second World War and the period immediately following it: the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact is ignored, the Soviet invasion of Poland on 17 September 1939 is described as "an action in defence of Western Ukraine and Belorussia against the Germans," there is no mention of Katyn (not even of the official Soviet version) and there are no labour camps. The burden of the war rests effectively if not exclusively on the eastern front, the Polish resistance movement is not mentioned until 1943 when the People's Guard started, the Polish underground state and its organization are ignored. The Polish government in exile is presented as a collection of anti-Soviet puppets. The facts mentioned include: the bravery of the private soldier during the September 1939 campaign and the martyrdom under the German occupation. In this version of history the resistance was organized by the communists, although the Underground Army is said to have taken part (bravely but following an incorrect political line). The liberating Red Army was prevented from coming to the assistance of the Warsaw rising, etc., etc. . . . After the war, the communists took the country over legally, according to the will of the people expressed freely in a referendum and elections, the armed

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underground had no popular support whatsoever and from the moment of the takeover the united nation started building socialism. The unnecessary cult of the individual, too rapid industrialization, to the detriment of general living standards, and the somewhat excessive zeal of the security services are noted in the period 1950–53. Sound balance returned in 1956. There was no Yugoslav conflict in 1948, no Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956 or in Czechoslovakia in 1968. There is no mention of March 1968 but in 1970 " there were difficulties between the administration and the workers of the Baltic Coast." These were, however, resolved " by the intervention of the Central Committee, which elected Comrade Gierek as its general secretary."

Since then, all difficulties have disappeared and the united nation no longer experiences conflicts of any sort. It can devote its energy to building the socialist state, enjoying full freedom and democracy under the leadership of the party. A textbook on contemporary history " Second World War and the Post War Period " by Roman Wapinski (a name not to be forgotten) and another, a collective work, " Contemporary Poland " do not see any grounds for conflict in the future and regard the situation with the utmost optimism. The nation and the rationalist state are one and the same and shall remain so. The only possible meaning of the national existence is to be subject to the state and the party and the only acceptable patriotism is one which looks to them. All this the Poles are taught by the study of their own history, ancient and modern.

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A Frozen Image of the Past

Marcin Krol

THE communist government which came to power in Poland in 1945 was a revolutionary government, a fact which today is often forgotten. Although it was not a revolution but the Red Army which made the take-over of power possible, nevertheless, at that time, the communist ideology had many features of a revolutionary ideology. One of these was the attitude towards the past, the desire to " start from scratch " present in all revolutionary ideologies. The past was a burden, an unnecessary load which was to be disposed of as quickly as possible. Such were the views proclaimed in the years 1945–48 by the official representatives of Marxist ideology, but the government, seeking some kind of *modus vivendi* with the people, was hesitant to mount an offensive against the past, against historical consciousness and against tradition. In 1949, with the start of the Stalinist period, the communist government, sure of itself and in full control of the country was ready to settle all scores with the past. In the field of history this reached its climax at the historical congress in Otwock in 1951, where even those historians who had close ties with Polish socialist tradition, but who fell short of a dogmatic Marxist approach, were condemned.

Marxist-Stalinist ideology influenced both historical writing and the methods of propaganda aimed at shaping " the new type " of historical consciousness. Its influence was felt both in the ideological reinterpretations of the past and in the selection of subject matter. Huge areas of history were condemned to oblivion, ignored or forgotten. Since 1956 the situation has changed considerably, but these changes relate merely to the extent of distortion and omission. Despite a severe decline in appeal, Marxist ideology and all its characteristics (the opposition of " progressive " and " reactionary " tendencies, the theory of class struggle, the materialist approach to history, the principles of the sovereignty of the party and democratic centralism) still determine the attitude of the party, and hence the system of propaganda and education, towards the past.

The changes which have taken place since 1956 are, however, of great practical importance. Historians can now write honest monographic studies, as long as the topic is not too closely related to such issues as Polish-Russian relations or twentieth-century politics, and as long as the author does not try to debunk such symbolic figures and events as Jaroslaw Dabrowski, Ludwik Warynski or the uprising of 1846. It has, however, proved impossible to write a synthetic work on the history of Poland or even on some longer period in Polish history unless the historian is willing not only to compromise on specific issues

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but to underplay the role of Catholicism and stress instead the importance of "progressive tendencies" or to put more emphasis on economic changes than on cultural history.

For this reason, it is difficult to give an unequivocal evaluation of works which provide a lot of source material at the cost of compromises on matters of interpretation.

For this reason also, all publications where the reader can be sure of getting if not the whole truth, then at least only the truth, play a particularly significant role. I have in mind the Catholic periodicals *Znak* (The Sign), *Wiez* (The Bond) and *Tygodnik Powszechny* (The General Weekly), publications by *Znak* and *Pax* as well as some specialized periodicals, serial publications and books from state publishing houses, whose authors or editors have managed to avoid falsehoods, even at the cost of narrowing their subject matter.

Thanks to a certain margin of freedom, the last decade has also seen the publication of such historical essays as Andrzej Kijowski's *Listopadowy wieczor* (November Evening), Bohdan Cywinski's *Rodowody niepokornych* (The Heritage of the Unsubmissive) or most recently Tomasz Lubienski's *Bic sie czy nie bic* (To Fight or not to Fight), as well as many works by Pawel Jasienica and Marian Brandys. These books were written with the contemporary reader in mind, a reader surrounded by official historical propaganda, and their strengths and weaknesses can be attributed to the fact, among others, that the authors themselves are bound by the same mental shackles as the rest of society, are involved in the same convoluted situation. Although in the last few years things have changed somewhat (there are now newspapers and books which come out independently of the censor and the authorities have given a new slant to their propaganda and found new ways of manipulating the past) nevertheless the basic convoluted state of affairs has remained the same. We shall first take a closer look at this state of affairs, then consider the most recent changes in the attitude towards history, in the understanding of tradition and in historical consciousness.

THE author of a historical essay starts out in the same state of mind as his readers. They both share some ideologically motivated views on the past, or at least some likes and dislikes. At the same time, they both feel the need for continuity, for filling the gaps artificially created by official propaganda and historical education. They are both inclined to think, therefore, that the whole of Poland's past *per se* is today of value. This represents a reaction against official propaganda, but at the same time is determined by that propaganda, determined in an altogether negative sense.

This is what makes the state of mind of the author of a historical essay or a piece of historical journalism (I am not thinking of purely popularizing works) so singular. All of the above-mentioned authors

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and many others like them look at the past with the present in mind and they are doing so consciously. Their main concern is to criticize some aspect of the present and they look to the past for arguments, analogies and examples. But the more individual their point of view, the more definite their stand, the greater their tendency towards irony, scepticism or analysis of human behaviour in all its complexity, the more likely they are to be accused of profaning the national heritage and of betraying their duties as writers, their duty to glorify their country's suffering.

This attitude, defined as it is by communist propaganda in a negative sense, has given rise to a particular brand of traditionalism, namely, the conviction that the fact that something comes from the past (excluding the official history of the Polish People's Republic) is an automatic guarantee of that thing's value, be it an attitude, an idea or a personal model. The totality of the national heritage is in itself regarded as valuable and only after this has been clearly acknowledged can one make choices, prefer one aspect of tradition to another. This traditionalism is, let me repeat, understandable and justified; one should, however, have a look at its adverse consequences.

First of all it produces a kind of geniality which paralyses the mind and critical faculties. Since it is assumed that the entirety of the national past is in danger of being falsified or forgotten then the "entirety" itself becomes worthy of undiscriminating remembrance, which in turn is, realistically speaking, impossible. O.K.—the supporters of such a view seem to be saying—in other, better times, there will be room for criticism, but now we all should concentrate on saving ourselves and our historical heritage, leaving discussion for later.

This gives rise to a second problem: anyone who in spite of everything decides to make any important choices which can, after all, be motivated by the simple likes and dislikes of the kind which make one prefer Gothic to Renaissance architecture (or the other way round) is forced to account for these choices from an ideo-political point of view. Thus preferences, interests, affinities of temperament or opinions resulting from personal quirks are raised to the rank of ideo-political choices. What is more important, however, is the fact that the language which can be used in a censored intellectual world is very imprecise and the use of historical analogies becomes exceptionally deceptive. Thus political tendencies are erroneously ascribed to people who have never had an opportunity to make any views they might have on the matter known openly. One gets so-called political discussions where the arguments of different sides are barely outlined and to translate them into rational political language is impossible. Using a historical example without examining it in detail can only lead to misunderstandings. Thus the use of historical disguise, which, because of the convoluted state of affairs, has to be expressed ambiguously,

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merely makes a rational analysis of the present situation much more difficult or even impossible.

THE take-over of power by the new team in 1970 brought significant changes to the style of propaganda. Let us emphasize: the style of propaganda, not its ideological content. The most characteristic example of this new style is the frequent appeal to the " moral and political unity " of society or of the nation. Thus, the old Marxist-Stalinist categories have not been abandoned, but a screen of solidarity has been cast over the dogmatic class vision of the world. The official attitude towards the past runs something like this: although there was both good and bad in our past, nevertheless all important events, all outstanding Poles deserve to be commemorated, with the proviso that their significance is not scrutinized. The best approach is to use formulae such as " the nation which has suffered so much," " we are the heirs of all those who created the national culture " or " independence was an ideal for which the best sons of our fatherland have fought." It is a vision of the noble history of a people who did not always happen to have the best leaders, but who now, supposedly, do. It is a vision of a society where everybody—believers and free-thinkers, the left and the right—had the best of intentions. Hence the celebration of anniversaries, which, as Vaclav Havel has brilliantly put it, give a discontinuous image of history, a consciousness of time where isolated events (anniversaries) acquire a mythical aura and where there is no progress. The turning point of 1945 caused everything which occurred before to appear both synonymous and simultaneous. What we have is a fairy-tale about the proud and noble heritage of a nation where Kosciuszko, Pilsudski, Sikorski and Poniatowski all fought for liberty alongside each other, and whatever differences of opinion, disputes and discussions there might once have been these all became irrelevant with the appearance of the new order, an order which encompasses and raises to a higher moral and political level our entire social and national tradition.

This new style of shaping the people's historical consciousness is a good example of how the system feeds on its own imperfect creation. For after all, such a vision of the past, such an attitude towards national tradition is basically the same as the attitude shaped by negative definition already discussed. What is today proclaimed by the proponents of " moral and political unity " regarding the image of the past is in accordance with the basic expectations of the people, expectations which grew over the years when their sense of historical continuity was blatantly violated and when history itself was falsified. This lame solidarism, this need for a national history no matter how fragmentary, this search for past events of which one may be proud and not just those which confirm the materialist theory of history, have all led the Polish people to have expectations about the past which

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have very little in common with the treatment of history as a source of genuine knowledge about events, attitudes and ideas. And now official propaganda has come out to meet these expectations. Having itself created this lame historical consciousness, it now raises it to official status. I do not see in this quite conscious strategy any particularly perverse design. I think that it was decided that the antagonized, impoverished people must be given something and that some kind of understanding must be reached between them and the government. The price to be paid for concessions regarding tradition was indeed small, as long as the ideological and dogmatic approach in national education and the humanities as a whole remained unchanged.

IS this necessarily a bad thing? The commemoration of the 60th anniversary of independence brought about an invasion of history. Never before since the establishment of the Polish People's Republic had so much been spoken and on so wide a scale about the history of the inter-war period. Taking advantage of this opportunity many writers published works which at any other time would probably not have passed the censorship. Documentaries from the period and dramatizations of political events were shown on the screen and on television. It would seem, then, that all was well. But a closer look at this invasion of the past shows that the same thing occurred as with the invasion of products and life-styles from the West.

The result is not a real link with the past or with European culture, but a completely fictitious vision designed to satisfy the popular imagination without providing any concrete knowledge, without stimulating the mind or awakening the spirit from lethargy. And public expectations are to a large extent fulfilled, for the Polish people, just as any other people, do not seek out difficult and serious problems and are ready to be satisfied with a portrait of Pilsudski on the jacket of a popular edition of a book, a film where there is slightly more truth than falsehood about the inter-war years or, in general, by a less hostile attitude towards national traditions.

The policy of promoting a somewhat more faithful image of the past, superficial as it may be, is not, however, an evil in itself. What is an evil is that it has given rise to a state of double convolution, of a doubly negative definition. At a somewhat higher level of social consciousness, a negative attitude towards the illusion of national unity created by the government accompanies the negative attitude towards the ideologically motivated destruction of the past. To liberate oneself from this doubly negative definition is accordingly more difficult. Formerly it was enough to expose the communist distortions and omissions. Today, if anyone wants to say something about the past which makes sense, he also has to rise above the defective, but not altogether reprehensible, official vision. We shall now consider how the independent press has dealt with this problem.

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THE independent press first appeared a few years ago and many of the doubts discussed here arise from the fact that we are witnessing only its beginnings and first efforts. My intention, however, is not to examine the reasons for the present situation but to describe it. A reading of such publications as *Zapis* (The Record), *Glos* (Voice), *Opinia* (Opinion), *Bratniak* (Fraternity), *Krytyka* (Critique) or *Droga* (The Way) leads to some surprising conclusions. Each of these periodicals displays a greater or lesser degree of the traditionalism discussed above, that is, the conviction that all tradition is, from today's point of view, a valuable heritage.

This traditionalism is first of all evident in such phrases as "the past is for all of us a treasure to be cherished" (*Opinia*), "for a patriot the entire tradition is important" (*Bratniak*) or in more general statements about "maintaining national traditions" (KSS-KOR Declaration on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Poland's independence).

Secondly, there are the "negative statements" claiming that any violation of any part of tradition can lead to the collapse of the whole, and where any criticism of the past is automatically regarded as an attack on national identity. And finally there are the arguments concerning the origin of the different groups where the old nationalistic background is contrasted with the new socialist and revolutionary background. Although tradition here is taken to mean the "total heritage," this is merely an abstraction and, in fact, nobody would wish to be associated with this. Some would reject the clerical philosophy of the end of the nineteenth century, others the SDKPiL (Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland) or the KPP (Polish Communist Party). And not even everything about the national uprisings can be recalled with unmitigated pride.

This traditionalism can be regarded as an attempt to make the point that Poland's history should be taught in its entirety, without any ideologically motivated omissions and that the people should be provided with a wide range of material on which to develop their own historical consciousness. That this is a sensible attempt is obvious and beyond discussion.

The question should be raised, however, especially by those who are interested in passing down not only information, but also values: how should the past be made to come to life? How to awaken the interest of listeners and readers, how to speak about the past so that it should mean something more than merely a basis for the development of a historical consciousness? In other words, a distinction has to be made between the teaching of history, even when undertaken in the belief that a greater knowledge of the history of one's society helps the development of a national or civic consciousness, and the teaching of moral values and ideals, aimed at shaping political attitudes, i.e. using tradition to further the advancement of political thought.

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It seems to me, and many direct declarations and other indirect evidence bear this out, that the independent press is dedicated more to the development of political thought than to the systematic teaching of history. And when with this in mind I consider the role of tradition in political thought I notice the following most recurrent trends:

1. The above-mentioned traditionalist trend. In addition to the various general invocations of the "totality" of tradition, we should also mention the statements by such organizations as KSS-KOR, ROPCiO or PPN in connexion with the 60th anniversary of Poland's independence. Of course, there are differences in emphasis on one issue or another in the declarations of the different groups, but in general they are all similar in tone. And so, there is a balanced account of the events of 1918, an evaluation of the Second Republic where, as opposed to official declarations, greater attention is given to achievements than mistakes.

2. The bringing together of events, ideas and historical figures which are believed to be relevant today, or which at any rate should be relevant. The unceasing, wholesale evocations of the fathers of our political thought, its creators and outstanding leaders is a typical example. This is most apparent with Pilsudski and Dmowski, who are now practically always mentioned in the same breath. They are represented as if they were ancient mythical figures, models of behaviour, not the leaders of specific political parties. No one discusses the actual consequences of their attitudes, activities or thoughts. They are invoked together just as Brutus and Cato, Pericles and Demosthenes were invoked by the leaders of the French Revolution. They are seen as mythical, perhaps magical figures, models of morality, and are mentioned together although they actually had little in common. The aim here is apparently to recall the general positive tradition of action and results in such convoluted analogies as that between KOR and the early National Democratic movement. This gives rise to the arguments about nationalistic ideology, inflated far beyond the actual importance and relevance of such issues.

3. The dispute about the nationalist (National Democratic) tradition between those who invoke the moderate version of the National Democratic tradition, or rather the Polish Catholic tradition, and those who are wary of the worst aspects of the National Democratic party in its later years. Thus, on the one hand, there are exaggerations like "I consider the totalitarianism of the nationalists to be the greatest ideological enemy of democratic opposition," and, on the other, the declarations of *Bratniak*, which so easily accuse others of having abandoned the national tradition or ideals. We also have the appeals made to the alleged history of a people struggling against an alien communist government with its small number of supporters. Thus it is said that "this society has its subjective history." This is obviously a case of taking over the alleged traditions of some alleged

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group and of claiming to be its true representative. The Romantics used to talk of "the people," the Marxists of a "class," but in both cases a silent majority was supposed to step out and oppose a vocal (but supposedly alienated) minority in the name of that homogeneous and truly patriotic majority. (Who, I wonder, would this majority be in Poland today, where there are several million party members, several million people connected with the regime?)

4. The negatively positive assessments of the post-war tradition. The most prevalent attitude is the rejection of the communist, revisionist, Marxist tradition *en bloc*. This is best illustrated by discussions concerning March 1968; almost everyone speaks of it as the zero point. An interesting view of the origins of today's opposition movement was expressed by the author of an article in *Aneks*:

> March was its zero point . . . the moment when all former political trends collapsed. What we have inherited from this collapse is not an understanding among those who refused to submit and are conscious of a common cause, but a hangover. If today it is easier than before to reach an understanding within the opposition, it is not because differences have been overcome but because the ideas which gave rise to these differences have become bankrupt. Although for the first time the continuity between generations has not been destroyed, although today the unsubmissive can rely on the advice of their older friends, the latter have no political thought to pass down.

The attitude that March 1968 also marked a new beginning is, however, very prevalent and, paradoxically, to be found even among those who, according to the author of the above quoted article, have nothing to say. I am thinking of the biographical notes at the end of *Zapis*, where none of the writers active in the Stalinist years have a literary biography dating from before 1956. They were all, apparently, born as writers somewhere around October of that year.

IN addition to traditionalism, another very important feature of the independent press is its solidarism which takes many different forms but which is to be found in all the journals regardless of their political colouring. It differs of course in content from the solidarism of "moral and political unity"; it is the solidarism of struggle and revolt, but its influence on the way people perceive the past and historical time is often similar.

This solidarism plays a part in all the trends we have already mentioned: the all-encompassing vision of tradition, the lumping together of events, personalities and ideas regardless of the differences separating them, the ready use of such broad terms as "nation" or "society" and, finally, the total rejection of all post-war tradition if it is in any way connected with the activities or the ideology of the government. All these evocations of tradition are general in character and serve no intellectual purpose; their aim is to give indirect and sometimes

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direct support to active patriotic and national attitudes. This solidarism becomes obvious in such statements as: discussions about the past are important but the final goal is "to make a unity out of society" (*Glos*) or that the arguments within the opposition are the result of "an unhealthy situation" and that the ideal should be the integration of the entire society (*Spotkania*). The degree to which these views are philosophically warranted differs, but what is important is not only their philosophical content but also the general trend towards unity, integration and solidarity.

This predominance of traditionalism and solidarism explains the absence of many historical issues from the independent press. Thus, there are few discussions on geo-political matters, on relations with Russia and Germany, or state and government issues in general; not much is said about the problems of the independence strategy, about the role of national culture and its ties with European culture. And yet, it would seem that for all those issues an analysis of the national heritage is necessary. Finally, political thinkers, unlike political activists, are hardly ever mentioned. I have not for instance come across the names of Mochnacki, Brzozowski, Szujski, Kaminski, Studnicki or Zdziechowski.

In greatly simplified terms, tradition can play two roles in political thought: one, to differentiate, to further the development of political language and political categories and to state issues; the other, to make legitimate, to justify a given course of action, political movement or ideological group. The first function I see as creative and positive, the second—passive and *re*-creative.

In the political thought expressed in the independent press, the function of tradition is first of all to justify. It is meant to demonstrate that the independent organizations have their predecessors, towering noble figures, that in speaking for the Polish people as a whole, they are not abusing their authority, since, as tradition shows, the Polish people have always sought the goals which the independent organizations set for themselves today. Such justification has real moral and psychological significance in a situation where the free election of the people's representatives is impossible. Nevertheless, the result of limiting the use of tradition to this function alone is that very little is achieved as far as historical lessons are concerned.

The traditionalism and solidarism of the independent press can be regarded as the third level of convolution of images of the past. Although the reasons behind each of these three levels are different the results are to a large extent similar. Thus, first there is the image of the past negatively defined by the Marxist-Stalinist distortions and omissions, then the solidarism of "moral and political unity" which exploits, in a supposedly positive sense, the crippled state of mind conditioned by those distortions, and, finally, there is the solidarism of independent journalism, which makes a point of being distinct from

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the solidarism of the government, but which appeals to the same static, frozen image of the past. It should also be mentioned that the solidaristic and traditionalistic trends in the portrayal of the past are also evident in some statements of the Church and in the way history is treated by, for example, the Polish section of Radio Free Europe.

Solidarism, coupled with traditionalism, rules out historical continuity. Not the consciousness of continuity, for that is a subjective state—if someone considers himself to be a direct follower of the ideas and activity of Pilsudski or Dmowski then he has every right to do so —but factual continuity. For such a continuity always exists and without acknowledging it, it is impossible to understand the present. The contemporary history of the Polish people includes not only the regaining of independence in 1918, the period between the wars and the war itself, but also the years under communist rule. It is impossible to eliminate these 30 years plus from the history of a nation. After all, it was life in such a world, whatever we may think of it, and under this rule, which has determined the education and consciousness of the majority of Poles who are adults today. And since in spite of foreign or local oppression, that continuity has existed, it is impossible to achieve an understanding of the present without realizing how the post-war times have directly or indirectly shaped reality and people's attitudes.

The combination of solidarism and traditionalism leads to a static, mythologized image of the past. And for the moment it is irrelevant to us whether that image represents the heroes of the struggle for independence, frozen in a magnificent gesture, or the heroes of the left with hand outstretched towards the poor and downtrodden of this world, or a modern montage, where the most weirdly assorted figures look at each other with an expression of " moral and political unity " in their eyes. Nor is it relevant when, according to some, that image comes to life again in 1956, 1968 or 1976.

This banishment of whole decades from historical memory is the work of those who either want to forget at any cost, or who wish to bring to account the people and ideas guilty of the evil. But if someone wishes to understand his own present situation, the situation of his society, and to formulate categories of political thinking, the failure to see this factual continuity can turn out to be an obstacle and a danger. This danger can take two forms: one, contempt for the past, making it stand still while duplicating attitudes, personal models and ideas without taking into consideration not only the present situation but also the influence of these attitudes, models and ideas over the last 40 years (such is the main trend today) and the other, the rejection of both the pre-war and post-war past in order to break out of that threefold convolution. Both these lead to an identical attitude towards the past, a renunciation of using tradition as a field of investigation and as a source of knowledge about the present.

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The Theatre of the 8th Day

Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR" Warsaw, 11 September 1978
Open Letter to International Cultural Organizations

The student Theatre of the 8th Day in Poznan is known to the Western public from its numerous visits to Austria, Belgium, Holland and Italy, where it met with lively interest and wide appreciation. In Poland it is known as the only young theatrical troupe to portray openly and uncompromisingly the reasons for social and political conflicts in our country. Each performance by the Theatre of the 8th Day was not only an indubitable artistic event but also a moral and intellectual occasion. The young and the not so young spectators were forced to think, their consciences were aroused and an intellectual ferment was generated. The authorities responded with constant surveillance, searches, arrests, censorship restrictions, housing harassment, and attempts to implicate the Theatre in financial swindles. On 7 September five members of the Theatre of the 8th Day were in the dock accused at the regional Warsaw court of abusing and assaulting a ticket collector of the municipal transport who also worked in the civil militia. This is a distortion of the facts. First the accused were detained on the pretext of not possessing bus tickets, a finable offence, and then they were taken to the Ministry of the Interior headquarters where a civilian functionary treated them brutally, hitting and kicking them. The trial lasted three days. Quite unashamedly the court tried to hinder the defence and violated the principles of open hearings by forbidding the public to enter the room while the witness for the prosecution was speaking.

Sentences were passed on 9 September. Tomasz Stachowski was given one year's imprisonment, Piotr Jurg one year's imprisonment, Jadwiga Jurg nine months suspended for four years, Beata Ziemska six months suspended for four years and Roman Radomski six months suspended for four years.

The trial of the members of the Theatre of the 8th Day is an attempt to intimidate cultural milieux in Poland. Accusing people who courageously express their opinions of criminal activity and pinning on them a fabricated criminal record is an increasingly frequent practice in our country. The sentence in the case of the Theatre of the 8th Day was aimed not only at the accused but also at social activities upholding universal cultural values.

Protests from foreign theatrical groups against the trial of the Theatre of the 8th Day

During the International Theatre and Open Art Meetings in Olesnica and Wroclaw from 22 September to 8 October 1978, we learned about

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the harassments, restrictions and reprisals that the Theatre of the 8th Day had been undergoing for the last two years.

We demand that reprisals against members of the group be stopped. In particular, we demand that the unjust prison sentences and fines for five actors, tried and sentenced as a result of police provocation, be repealed. We protest against all attempts to use these unjust sentences as a pretext to restrict the activities of this theatrical group. We demand that full freedom of artistic utterance be restored to members of the group and that the ban on foreign travel for nearly all the actors of the Theatre of the 8th Day be lifted.

Signed by 19 companies from various countries and 16 theatre critics, dramatists and representatives of student and theatrical organizations.

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The Poles' Self-Portrait

Krystyna Bronkowska

THE exhibition* has now closed after about six months of crowds and debate. Its declared intention was to bring the Poles closer to self-definition. It was to be a one-off equivalent of the National Portrait Gallery (Poland has not got one), only more selective, disciplined, and informed by the creators' own view of history and of the present. Professor Rostworowski and his team carried out their intention brilliantly, if didactically. In the process they managed to destroy a number of national myths and to create others.

The fashionable and at the moment universal appetite for self-knowledge both at the individual and group level coincided, happily in this case, with the Poles' old but constant preoccupation with themselves. Their national identity has been threatened so often that the Poles have perhaps better grounds than most on which to justify this deep-seated and sometimes irritating national characteristic.

Portraiture is, in any case, a genre close to the Polish heart. Portraits are not only for their subjects to be able to look into, as one looks into a mirror; and not just for gleeful acquaintances to look at their friend as seen by the world. Both the artist and the subject take this opportunity to express their need to posture and to pose but often also to generalize: in short to make life into a theatre of sorts.

At the exhibition, a Western visitor is surprised at first by the plainness of the display. It does look drab and bare, with very few frills and no visual tricks. Its 1,000 or so paintings are simply hung, there are no purpose-built display cases and environments such as we are accustomed to, no false walls or suspended ceilings. The exhibition is arranged, in the main, on the sober nineteenth century model. This, after a moment's puzzlement, becomes not only a relief but a positive advantage: the rigorous underlying scheme can be followed and its intention and effects better grasped.

It is the historical progression which provides the central, if self evident, surprise of the exhibition: the visual documentation of the Poles' oscillation between East and West. Firstly, in the Middle Ages the Poles appear to have been very much like other Western Europeans. This is fascinating in a country which emerged so late into the world of Christianity and of the written word: a country and a court, moreover, which kept its Eastern ties in good repair,

* National Museum, Cracow: "The Poles' Self-Portrait," an exhibition prepared by a team under Marek Rostworowski. Periods:—1500 "In the European Orbit," 1500–1790 "The Commonwealth of the Gentry," 1800–1917 "The Nation Regains its Bearings," 1917–1945 "Between Tradition and Revolution," 1945—"The People's Poland."

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marrying its princes to Orthodox Sophias and Agaphias. Yet they looked, they stood, they sat and they dressed in the accepted fashion of the West. It is the constancy of the "belonging" which is the discovery of the exhibition. The quality is so uniform that a visitor may perhaps be forgiven for asking whether this could be, in part, an outcome of deliberate selection. Whatever the complexities behind it, the proposition, even if it is only a proposition, is presented most convincingly.

Orientalization sets in perceptibly in the early sixteenth century and gradually changes not only the accessories of life such as dress (an Islamic garment becoming the Polish national costume) but the very idea that the Poles harboured of themselves at that time. Facial features (strangely, this is only true of men) acquire by the end of the century an oriental cast. This is most striking in the less accomplished, more countrified paintings which one feels are bound to be closer to the truth.

The Poles' return to the West from their oriental adventure came late in the age of Enlightenment. The change appears to have been fairly rapid, except among the most rustic of the gentry. It extended quickly far beyond the apex of courtly elegance and/or intellectual eminence. Poles remained a Western nation throughout the nineteenth century, despite becoming drabber, more rigid and more provincial. At least, this is true of the psychological, realistic portraits we see, but in the middle of the century another, romanticized and exalted vision of themselves became prominent. In it, faces acquire angelic, unearthly, martyred expressions. These portraits of ideas rather than of people lead on naturally to the symbolist movement of the end of the century: it does not come as a break as it perhaps would elsewhere.

The period between the two wars brings a satisfying combination of new approaches to painting and the introduction of new classes of subjects: peasants, workers and women come into their own, no longer as representatives of other people's ideas. Strangely, the Second World War, still an obsessive presence with Polish writers, film and theatre directors, is very scantily represented. This may have been inevitable, since the organizers refuse to explore and exploit photographs as records of the day. The subject was clearly beyond the anecdotal treatment it received in the paintings of the era of socialist realism and, in this exhibition, only Wroblewski's "Execution" does it a kind of justice.

The last, post-war, part is in many ways the most significant and the most successful. It must be said, however, that neither a Polish critic nor the visitors with whom I talked agreed with this view. The approach is different here: images are presented dramatically in the rather grandiose foyer, and above the entrance staircase, so that one has to enter and to leave the past through the present. The

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paintings are crowded, hung everywhere: across doorways and above visitors' heads. That the drama may have resulted from the lack of space does not make it any less real or the messages less urgent.

On the whole, the complex business of portraying a modern nation we expect to be a task for cinema or a photographic reportage rather than for painting or near-painting. Yet, as a result of an act of, no doubt, difficult but accurate choice, the exhibition manages to communicate just this: a heterogeneous image of Poles as they are today. That this has not been accomplished by the social realists is not surprising: it is the neo-symbolists, the masters of compression and selection, the modern myth-makers who succeed. To get through the external uniformity of dress, manner and posture and to convey their insights, they use selection, distortion and arrangement.

The first approach is represented by "The Pole, 1979," a quasi-surrealist torso of the present Pope as a thinking athlete, stripped of all panoply and given a very blue plain sky for a background. The distortion method can be seen in a number of grotesque portraits which seem visual equivalents of Gombrowicz, Mrozek and Rozewicz. As in other arts, Poles find this the most natural way of looking at themselves. The most grotesque of all, because the best known, is the self, and the proliferation of self-portraits confirms this. Panek's face of a village fool reduced to a few lines and the modern version of a baroque portrait-epitaph by Leszek Sobocki: a tormented head backed by a no parking sign, a comment on the motorization drive and a cross.

High above visitors' heads in the entrance vestibule hangs a series of seven or eight photographic images. The manner is not unlike Lichtenstein; the purpose is different. The series, by Jan Switka, on a white background in black and red is called "The Crowd: a classification." The effect is far removed from that of classifying: Switka succeeded in freeing the crowd so that it became a collection of autonomous, sharply differentiated individuals. Switka's is a political statement of some importance and its treatment suggests that the exhibition planners wished to endorse it.

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A Decent Person and Higher Necessity

Stefan Nowak

Stefan Nowak's essay "On Contemporary Opinions and Emotions," of which the fragment "A Decent Person and Higher Necessity" is an extract, comes from a collection of essays written and published to commemorate the exhibition described in the previous article. Historians, a literary critic, and Nowak, a sociologist, discuss the Poles' idea of themselves throughout their history.

The fragment chosen requires little comment except perhaps to say that institutional dishonesty coupled with ideals of strictly private probity is by no means an exclusively Polish problem. It certainly extends to the whole of the Soviet world. As the size, number and depersonalization of state institutions grow in other parts of the world it is becoming more familiar everywhere.

It is worth noting that this sharply critical paper was originally prepared for the "Poland 2000" Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

WHEN considering accepted moral values, we come to a set of problems centred around the model of a "Decent Person" i.e. a person of integrity. Being a Decent Person implies a degree of conforming to accepted norms of conduct which include a measure of altruism, helpfulness and sensitivity to the needs of others. A decent person does not indulge in public brawls, is not a habitual drunk and generally behaves and dresses "properly" in accordance with the standards of his social group. Decent People take their family obligations seriously and are ready to help others although not beyond the course of duty i.e. not to their own detriment. It must be noted that in normal circumstances the norms of altruism apply only within the Decent Person's own social group; perhaps extending further than his circle of close friends but certainly not beyond the circle of social acquaintances. The situation may change dramatically, however, in exceptional circumstances, such as a natural disaster, when the extent to which the norms of altruistic behaviour apply widens beyond all expectations. On those occasions, from under the ubiquitous, seething carapace of aggression and hostility there arises unsuspected goodwill, an understanding for the needs of strangers and a far-reaching readiness to help. But it seems a pity that it takes such strong stimuli to uncover those hidden resources.

It is interesting to note that while moral values govern personal relationships they do not apply to the Decent Person's working life except in a few professions where norms of behaviour are a part and

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parcel of the professional ethos. One can be a Decent Person and a useless worker, even a worker prepared to break the law. The everyday language differentiates clearly between the person who steals and one who "helps himself" to institutional property. A thief is someone who puts his hand into another's pocket but an employee who nicks something remains a Decent Person, through and through, in the eyes of his peers. The social acceptance of institutional thieving extends, however, only to "ordinary" people and excludes members of the political and administrative establishment, who are, invariably, and unanimously condemned for the same conduct. A normal Pole, who does not consider himself bound by moral norms in his dealings with official institutions, will judge with the utmost severity anyone high up on the institutional ladder who fails to meet the same norms. A sales girl "helps herself" to public property but a chairman of a local council, and anyone above him, is a thief if he behaves likewise. Practically all the students I questioned about their views on giving and taking bribes in order to obtain a flat, condemned unequivocally the takers but found the givers perfectly justified. Numerous moral compromises are practised, excused, even approved, by the majority in the name of circumstances generally recognized as Higher Necessity. The existence of Higher Necessity brings forth a remarkable softening of judgment, indeed an absolution.

It may be worth while to have a look at other sets of values, such as truth and personal dignity. On the one hand, it would be impossible to maintain that our society holds truthfulness to be a virtue of prime importance: this is where we differ fundamentally from the Anglo-Saxon countries, where a reputation of being a liar disqualifies one both morally and socially. On the other hand, Poles are highly sensitive to what they regard as the mendacity of official announcements and the mass media. But most of us do not perceive the wide discrepancy between the views we express in public and those we share only with close friends and relations as a moral dilemma. It is as if the views we express publicly were not a part of ourselves but of a public ritual dictated by the overwhelming Higher Necessity. Numerous stories about men who "have to do this and that and such and such because, poor things, they have wives and children" circulate widely and illustrate the public consensus on the need to surrender to Higher Necessity. Again, as with stealing, the indulgent attitude applies only to the members of one's own social group. Anyone addressing a group from higher up the hierarchy is invariably denied the absolution of Higher Necessity and his audience judges him by the stern criteria of complete truthfulness. The same audience will, however, feel free to go through the motions of supporting and even developing the views presented to them, always in the spirit of surrendering to Higher Necessity which exempts them from the exigencies of adhering to the truth. They are unlikely to feel that their personal dignity

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has suffered in the process, nor indeed that they had been involved in deception of any kind. In fact, the concepts of personal dignity and of truthfulness are not closely linked in the Polish mind: dignity belongs to another set of values altogether and it serves as a measure of one's ability to stand up to the pressure of other people's opinion. The typical reaction of a Pole, his dignity having been outraged by the unwanted advice offered, is to tell the advice-giver very sternly indeed to mind his own business. In more general terms, a man is thought to have a sense of dignity if he practises what he preaches, i.e. what he considers "right." It matters very much that what he practises should be also regarded as "right" by the people he respects. If my observations are correct, it may be said that in the Polish system of moral values the sense of personal independence in matters of judgment and action ranks very high. It does not, however, preclude conformity with generally accepted patterns: the two attitudes coexist.

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The New Regime

Marek Tarniewski

THE party's domination over the state and society, and the domination of the party leadership over the party, is demonstrated very clearly in the principles of the regime: in particular, the principles of the *leading role of the party* and of democratic centralism, which in practice means simply *centralism.*

Although these principles are officially accepted and propagated, they are extra-constitutional. However, it is debatable whether the constitutional legalization of these principles would be advantageous with regard to the generally accepted aims of passing laws.

It has been said that the written law should not diverge too far from practice and that it should not contain norms which are certain not to be followed. But a constitution is not a description of how a social system functions. The constitution is law, and if government violates the law, it does not follow that such behaviour should in every instance be legalized. We would then be dealing with a very specific understanding of what the law is: merely a description of governmental action. The element of duty disappears.

There are nevertheless situations when, for the legal consciousness of society, it is better to have even a broken and circumvented law, than to have in fact no law at all, as then the application of the law becomes entirely flexible and depends only on the unhampered will of the legislator. Such situations constitute a special case of the positive functions of hypocrisy. It has been said that hypocrisy is the homage which falsehood pays to truth, and which vice pays to virtue. The law may thus constitute a specific homage which the authorities pay to political morality. Even if they do not obey certain laws, at least they admit that these laws should be obeyed.

In any case, despite the fact that the two principles mentioned above have an extra-legal character, it is precisely these principles (as against many constitutional principles) which account for the organization and functioning of the social system in socialist countries.

If one were to extend the list of the main principles of the regime, it would be necessary to add another two: first, *the maximalization of nationalization*; and, secondly, *the limitation of initiative and elimination of variety.*

The principle of the maximalization of nationalization is expressed only partially in the law, and often in a distorted form. A "take-over by the state of the main branches of the national economy" (Statute of 3 Jan. 1946) was established initially. The Constitution of the Polish People's Republic speaks of "socialization" (Art. 7) and the

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"common national property" (Art. 8), as well as of the fact that "the Polish People's Republic protects individual agricultural holdings" (Art. 10) and that it "acknowledges and protects (. . .) individual property and the right to inherit land, buildings, and other means of production belonging to peasants, artisans, and craftsmen" (Art. 12). These are examples of legal descriptions of the role of the state. This role is also underlined by propaganda, and finds its expression in the postulate of "strengthening socialist statehood." In the exposition of the law, the role of the state is sometimes left unclear and sometimes (as with the economic matters described in the Constitution) it is presented as more modest than it is in actual practice. Thus, the divergence between the law and reality is apparent not only with respect to the leading role of the party.

The principle of limiting initiative and eliminating variety is, in a sense, formulated in the statutes of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP), in the form of a prohibition against factional and anti-party activity. (The principle of centralism is also mentioned in the statutes of the party, although this "centralism" is modified by an adjective.) Outside of the party, the principle of the limitation of initiative and elimination of variety has a totally extra-legal character (as does the principle of the leading role of the party contained in the Soviet and Rumanian Constitutions, but not in the Polish Constitution). The principle of the limitation of initiative and elimination of variety appears often in the form of exhortations against "unplanned" and "spontaneous" activities. Sometimes a special case of this principle is presented, as in the condemnations of the "free play of political forces." It then takes a form of the principle of *the elimination of opposition.*

Five Structures

The leading role of the party in socialist systems leads to a characteristic multi-track system of organization. We are dealing here with a duplication of the administration by the party apparatus, which has the final power of decision, although this is not always publicly revealed. This duplication complicates the decision-making process and leads to the existence of many fictional elements in the organizational structure. These are the "dummy-institutions," which quite often do not even fulfil their concealing function, since their fictional character is generally recognized. Despite many personal connexions, the party constitutes the second institutional structure, which parallels the state administration.

This, however, is not the end of the multiplicity of arrangements; there are other, relatively separate, and relatively independent institutional structures. The police apparatus, which is relatively independent from both the state administration and the party, wields considerable power and constitutes the third such structure. The fourth structure

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takes us away from the internal situation and concerns the government of the Soviet Union, whose role is not limited by its frontiers. These four structures are supplemented by a fifth, extra-organizational one.

It could be said that the arrangements are even more multiple, including sectors of the state administration, other than the police, such as, for example, the army or industry. Here, however, we are concerned with the most apparent distinctions. These structures differ from one another, but are also connected; one can ascertain the co-ordination of activities and common workings of all of them. Their separation is decided by the relative strength of the differences between them and the occasional conflicts.

Members of the administration would occasionally like to reduce or even eliminate the interventions of the party and of the police in the activities of the state organs. From their point of view, such intervention is sometimes treated as unnecessary and informal. In fact, the administrative activities of the party have generally an extra-legal character. In this sense, it is an informal activity.

The members of the party through their participation in it stress that the existence of the party as the second structure is not, in their opinion, improper, that the party is in order, at least in the sense that it is advantageous to belong to the party. On the whole, however, the members of the party do not want the police to rule over the party. This point of view is well represented by some fragments of the book by Wladyslaw Bienkowski, *The Motors and the Brakes of Socialism* (*Motory i Hamulce Socjalizmu*).

The author emphasizes the divergence between the party and the police, paying special attention to the informal and uncontrolled character of police actions. The security forces, according to him, act " impulsively," and that means that they act outside the control of the party. Sometimes the police has also been criticized by the leadership of the party, although not for its actions against society, but for its anti-party activities, directed against some (sometimes even very highly placed) party members. At the Eighth Plenary Meeting of the PUWP Central Committee in October 1956, much attention was paid to the anti-party activities of the security forces, and these were condemned. The director of the Tenth Department of the Ministry of Public Security (i.e. the department concerned with the party) and the managers and employees of the investigative department were tried in court. The party attitude towards the police is occasionally reflected on the boundaries of art and propaganda. Recently, more and more often, the figure of a noble " spy "—an *ubek*—has been glorified (e.g. in the works of J. Bronislawski, in the career of Czechowicz). Occasionally, however, a conception similar to that of the October Plenary meeting and of Bienkowski also appears: we are shown the *ubek* as a villain, while the party secretary is a positive hero (such a division

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of roles is shown in Henryk Kluba's film about the beginnings of the post-war regime, entitled *The Sun Rises Once a Day*).

The members of the police force probably have most vested interests in the richness of the divisions within the structure. It is only the existence of the fourth structure which they are likely to complain about, seeing in it something informal. This does not mean that they are not willing to cooperate with external factors, even if with reservations. It is nice to control, and less pleasant to be controlled, especially if that control comes from abroad; nevertheless such control has existed and continues to exist. Some time ago the connexions between the third and the fourth structure—that is between the police and the Soviet Union—were very pronounced. The activity of the security services was coordinated from the Soviet Union and directed towards the entire society, including party members. When, in October 1956, the anti-party attitude of the police was criticized, party arrangements were not mentioned, while the agreements and directives from outside were not discussed clearly. However, Jakub Berman, the former member of the Politbureau of the PUWP Central Committee, mentioned the strong pressure from the collaborators of Beria, from central and highest sources, and from advisors and Army Information. Currently, these issues are not officially discussed.

Finally, there exists the fifth structure, extra-organizational, and informal in the sociological meaning of the term. This structure is a meeting place of diverse interests, a place where a little may be gained and much may be lost. Everyday problems are taken care of through this informal arrangement. These are the problems which, in view of the complications of the organizational structures, it is easier to take care of by having some good " side access " to the administration, the party, or the police. There exists the borderline area, difficult to investigate, of the organizational and informal activity of the security forces. It is on this borderline that vice-minister Matejewski and his friends, playing the leading roles in this department, conducted their activities. In this case, however, the matter was not of everyday importance. There is also an informal borderline between the party and the police. It is on this borderline that the deals and fights inside the party often take place, as, for example, in Poland at the end of the 1960s. From time to time, the Soviet Union also intervenes informally.

ALL these structures are not isolated. First of all, they are tied together " at the top ": this connexion is based on the issuing of directives and on the arrangement of understandings at the highest level. Discussions about the activities of the government are conducted during the meetings of the Politbureau (the first structure—the administration, and the second—the party). The Politbureau issues directives to the security forces (the second structure—the party, and the third—the police). There are party-government talks between Poland and the

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Soviet Union (the fourth structure—the USSR, the second—the party, and the first—the administration). The structures are also connected by " our people "—people who represent one structure, but act in another.

The leading role of the party is implemented in everyday activities by members of the party, who are subject to party directives but fulfil various administrative functions. In March 1968, many (although by no means all) representatives of the so called " forces of order," " our people " from the ministry from Rakowiecka Street (representatives of the security forces), made their appearance in various individual institutions. Similarly, the intelligence services of the country against which Poland, it seems, does not conduct any counter-intelligence activities, have some of " their people " installed in Poland.

The different structures are only relatively independent and this independence should not be exaggerated. The hierarchy is as follows: the Soviet Union, party, police, state administration. The party is subordinated to the external factors, while the administration and police are responsible to the party. As usual, the executive powers or the subordinated structures do have some possibility of autonomy, opposition, or even resistance; nevertheless, subordination is more prevalent.

LET us turn our attention to the range and methods of activities of the various structures. Gierek and Jaroszewicz claimed that the government should govern. But the initiative comes from elsewhere. On most issues the party has the initiative, while on more important matters (military or international politics), it lies with the Soviet Union, but there are also cases in which the initiative belongs to the police. Russia, the party, and the police constitute the " alarm " institutions; they are to signal dangers and to intervene. They also have the power of veto. The alarm activities of the Soviet Union and the police are perhaps less frequent than those of the party. The party has taken upon itself the care of daily affairs, and because of this it has more occasion to intervene. In the case of the police the interventions usually concern the cases of individuals (i.e. who should be allowed to do what). The alarm activities of Russia are difficult to predict; at this moment they are sporadic, but can always occur, and occur in the strangest instances. The alarm activities of the party are constant. The government does not govern fully, the party does that instead, but the party is also limited from outside (by the Soviet Union) and from inside (by the police).

The complications resulting from the multiplicity of organizational structures are most apparent from a central or lateral position in one of the hierarchies. When seen from below, the structures seem undifferentiated. The way in which one sees the social structure differs according to one's position within this social structure. What is seen from below, and what is seen from above, is more or less homo-

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geneous, although different. From the bottom, one sees that " they " govern; from the top, one also sees " them," who do not understand many things.

Centralized states in which additional structures lie hidden behind the facade are not a new phenomenon. Without reaching for more distant examples, the coexistence of an official state structure with a highly developed apparatus of secret police existed, for example, in France at the time of Napoleon I, and in Eastern Europe it existed in tsarist Russia. The activities of the Third Division of the Imperial Chancellery and later of the Okhrana were often directed against the official representatives of government policy. Jozef Azef, who worked for the police, effectively initiated, then denounced, the assassinations of state dignitaries. The fatherland of the international proletariat, created in 1917, inherited and further enriched these complications. In addition to the state and the police with constantly changing names, the party entered on the scene, as a " million-fingered hand tightened into a smashing fist," according to Mayakovsky. After 1933 the same situation occurred in Germany, where the leading role was also fulfilled by a single party and a concealed police with a complicated structure. The police was implementing its own conceptions, occasionally in advance of the activities of the party and the government, and sometimes it acted for purposes different from those of the government. When the people's democracies were created, together with the state, party and police structures, the fourth external force started to play a role, often participating in the very creation of these countries: the fatherland of the world proletariat with its own already well-formed state, party and police. These three structures of the great fatherland act upon the structures in the smaller fatherlands.

Elite and Class

The word " class " is given various meanings. Sometimes a specific mystique develops around it, and classes are assigned characteristics more commonly ascribed to individuals. In the works of some thinkers we can find assertions that classes act in history, conduct various struggles, and even have consciousness, and therefore that in some sense they think, and moreover, that what they think is somehow independent of what the individuals who comprise those classes think. It is said that classes have objective consciousness, or final consciousness, and that this class consciousness is neither the sum nor the resultant of individual consciousnesses, but exists independently of individual people. The claims are made that this objective class consciousness of the proletarians which exists independently from the proletarians, is expressed in the activities of the political party, which demonstrates this consciousness in its deeds. Such ideas can be found in the writings of perceptive individuals, like the Marxist George

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Lukacs, as well as in the writings of less intellectually refined propagandists.

It is possible, however, to treat the concept of class in a more secular fashion, and believe that classes inhabit earth rather than the heaven of "objective necessity" and that they are composed of people who possess some common characteristics. Different conceptions of class will differ depending on one's choice of these characteristics.

Even on the basis of Marxist-inspired sociology, it is possible to find quite secular conceptions of classes. Thus, classes are understood as aggregates which differ in their relationships to the means of production. We can then divide people into those who own such means of production and those who do not. Various additional characteristics will allow us to distinguish more differentiated classes; for example, it is possible to isolate the aggregate of the owners of some specific kind of means of production. It is also possible in some cases to treat ownership as a graduated characteristic, and claim that situations exist where the means of production are owned to a greater or lesser extent. Then, we can order classes hierarchically according to their different degrees of ownership. The division into two classes, those who own the means of production and those who do not, will be in this case only a first approximation. It will also be possible to speak about the greater or lesser "class-character" of social aggregates whose representatives control the means of production to a greater or lesser extent.

CLASS differentiation is economic: it concerns the ownership of the means of production, i.e. a phenomenon in the sphere of economic relations. Another differentiation is political, according to the degree of participation in power. Those whose access to power is greatest—those who actually govern—are called the power elite. Thanks to nationalization, centralism, and homogeneity the power elite controls the principal means of production. Therefore, according to the above definition, the power elite also constitutes a class. A close connexion between economic and political power constitutes one of the features of the new order. The power elite, because it controls the principal means of production, not only governs, but also constitutes one of the classes.

It is worth realizing, however, that this power elite, understood as a class, nevertheless constitutes a class of a different type from its various forerunners. This difference is connected with the particular character of the ownership of the principal means of production in the new order. We will proceed to a discussion of this new class, and specifically of what distinguishes it from the aggregates which were traditionally called classes.

The control of the basic means of production, or property, has, in the case of the new class, a collective and indivisible character. The controllers of the means of production do not constitute an aggregate

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of individual owners (such a class was constituted by the capitalists, especially in the early stages of capitalism). The principal means of production are controlled by an organization, and an individual is a member of this class by virtue of occupying a special position in this organization.

Historically, there have been other cases of organizations as collective controllers of the means of production, and even more generally, as controllers of the state. Such states were, however, rarely analysed in class terms, because in order to do so it is necessary to admit collective, or, more exactly, organizational property as a discriminant characteristic of a class. Thus, it is possible to conduct a class analysis of the priest state in ancient Egypt, or of the Jesuit state in Paraguay, as well as of later states with centrally controlled economies, including such states today.

The second peculiarity of the organizational form of ownership, and the peculiarity of the new class, consists in the fact that inheritance is not, in this case, a transmission of property to another individual subject. In the case of the ownership of the means of production, controlled by the new class, we are not dealing with individual inheritance at all, but with the continuous ownership of property by a group subject (although the personal composition of the group does change).

In some partnerships, the co-owners are personally responsible for the obligations of the company as a whole; in joint-stock companies this is not so. Because of the limited personal liability of the members of the new class, the property they control is reminiscent of the property of a joint-stock company. There are, however, differences. Shares can be sold to anybody, and co-ownership is thereby transferred. Here, however, there is no possibility of the individual transfer of a share. The co-owners control as a group the entire property, but no one individual can withdraw his share or sell his stock. There are no stocks and no investment.

The number of actual controllers, members of the power elite having economic and political power, is small because of centralization. The small number of members of this group is inconsistent with some definitions of class. For example, according to Lenin, "classes are huge groups of people, differing one from another according to the place they occupy in the historically determined social system of production, in their relationship (legally sanctioned and determined by law) to the means of production, in their role in the social organization of labour . . ." If a group of people is small, then, regardless of the other elements of Lenin's definition, this group would not, according to him, constitute a class. This problem, however, is less essential. What seems more crucial are the specific characteristics of the power elite as a class, which we described above, and which are connected with the collective (organizational) character of ownership.

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LET us remember, however, that the "owners of People's Poland" are often described as plenipotentiaries, and that the full ownership resides a little higher and a little further. In any case, the new class (at least at some periods and in some socialist countries) would constitute something like a "comprador bourgeoisie" (which exists in Third World countries), whereas the full extent of power would belong in these cases only to the "agents" abroad—in the Soviet Union.

At present, the processes of the economic integration of socialist countries are not advanced enough for the control of the economy to be transferred totally to the Soviet Union. The new class of owners of the Polish means of production still resides in Warsaw rather than in Moscow. And the situation is even clearer in Yugoslavia or Rumania. The new regime and its characteristic relations of ownership of means of production (at least in some countries) can exist independently of Soviet domination and limitation of sovereignty. Although the ruling apparatus in Poland is supported by the Soviet Union, and the role of this state for the governing of Poland is important, the range of economic decisions made within Poland is nevertheless quite extensive when compared, for example, with the Stalinist period. It is obvious that we are dealing here with historical changes of degree.

The degree of independence of individual enterprises is connected with ownership; if their independence is significant, additional complications may arise in the class analysis of society. With decentralization, the directors of enterprises might possess at least a partial share in property. Ownership in this case has the character of a partnership and does not belong only to one group: the enterprise is supervised by the central authorities, but also partially by the director, or even by workers' self-government. These possibilities are, however, hardly ever realized. Thus far, even in Yugoslavia, the federal and republican party and state leadership have played a decisive role in economic matters and therefore in matters of ownership. If, then, one desires to consider the gradation in the control of property, one can distinguish more social classes than the two basic ones and speak, for example, about the middle class. We shall consider this below.

LET us return once more to Marx and to his distinction between a class-in-itself and a class-for-itself. A class-in-itself is a class, an aggregate distinguished on the basis of a similar relationship to the means of production on the part of its members; it is, however, an aggregate whose peculiarities end there. In particular, there are no organizational links between the members of a class-in-itself. A class-for-itself constitutes, according to Marx, a class of a higher type, and its superiority results from its having characteristics not shared by the class-in-itself. One of these characteristics is its consciousness of the class situation, another, its degree of organization. The new class, although small in number, and therefore not fulfilling Lenin's defini-

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tion, compensates for its small numbers through organization and consciousness. Thus, even if the requirements of Lenin's definition are not fulfilled in this case, Marx's requirements specifying the characteristics of a class-for-itself are fulfilled. If, then, we decide to speak about classes in the new regime, then, as we can see, there are reasons to regard the power elite as one of the classes, as an aggregate differentiated because of its particular relationship to the means of production. This class is well organized, and its power is determined by the state and party organization led by the power elite. Directly below the power elite we find a far more numerous group of executors of its directives: the functionaries of the party, state and police, who act in the middle ranks of the hierarchy of government.

Apparatchiki: Functionaries

It is possible to divide society into the elite and the non-elite, or in a parallel way, into the new class and the rest. We have considered the principles of such a division. We can treat this analysis as the first approximation. Often, however, in the social structure we observe gradations and speak of a greater number of classes or social strata: the Americans distinguish upper, middle and lower classes, and within each of these classes they sometimes differentiate between an upper and a lower sub-class. In such a scheme we have an upper-upper class, a lower-upper class, an upper-middle class, a lower-middle class, etc. The differentiation of income was the primary characteristic used in establishing this scheme. A similar scheme can be applied to the description of stratification connected with huge organizations. In this manner, if we stop at the tripartite division, aside from the power elite and those who do not have power over anybody, we would obtain a fairly differentiated middle class: people over whom the elite has power, but who themselves also have power over others.

Numerically, from 600,000 to 700,000 people occupy supervisory positions in Poland; this includes everybody from a foreman who supervises a production department in a factory to the First Secretary of the PUWP Central Committee. All of them occupy at least a middle position in the power hierarchy. However, not all of them should be counted as the new middle class. We have to exclude those who belong to the power elite, as well as those who occupy the lowest supervisory positions in production and administration.

Zbigniew Byrski has written about this new middle class and referred to the concept of nomenclature. He writes:

> If we are to take the Polish People's Republic as an example, then in the nomenclature of the middle class should be included the whole party apparatus in the provinces and in the capital, except for the executives of the Voivodships and the Central Committee, that is the staff members of the party in administrative institutions, service organizations, and factories, as well as the directors of

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larger enterprises. Further, we can include the propaganda apparatus, the ministerial staff except for the highest leading group, and the mass of insignificant officials, and, finally, the middle officer ranks of the army and the police. As far as the two privileged departments—the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs—are concerned, we can probably include in the middle class of *apparatchiki* those functionaries who are placed relatively low. Altogether, this middle class in Poland does not include more than 300,000 people, and constitutes approximately 1% of the population.

The new middle class, just like the power elite, is a part of the extensive organization. It is not an aggregate of people acting individually, like small businessmen, or the owners of agricultural holdings. The *apparatchiki* are connected with the hierarchy of official subordination, and their fate depends on their position in the hierarchy. Their main function is to wield executive power and conduct everyday management. The *apparatchiki* implement the orders of the power elite, they give them a concrete shape. In institutions under provincial authority (and, in fact, under the provincial party committee), or in particular enterprises, personnel policies and the division of goods constitute the field of activity in which the *apparatchiki*, while implementing the directives of the party, have their own input. They are the distributors of goods, and can withdraw those goods as well. They decide about such matters as staffing, the distribution of bonuses, prizes, apartments, concessions, building materials, and the means of production in the countryside or discretionary taxation (the so-called sur-tax).

Apparatchiki take good care of their own interests in the division of goods and make sure that their superiors are satisfied. Apart from concrete decisions concerning personal politics and the division of goods, the *apparatchiki* are involved in the details of the execution of economic, organizational, and propaganda decisions made by the power elite (the exact location of some planned enterprises, decisions on the technology of production, the particular interventions of the censorship, the stylistic form of the ideological articles in the press, etc.). Moreover, the *apparatchiki* supply information to the power elite on the basis of which decisions are to be made. Through this transmission of information, the *apparatchiki* can partially influence the decisions which they will later be called upon to execute.

The *apparatchiki* put decisions into effect, report to their superiors, divide goods, forbid some activities or delay their solution, and transmit decisions to a different level in the hierarchy or to other institutions. But the *apparatchiki* fulfil additional functions as well, which strengthen their connexion with the power elite. It is from among the *apparatchiki* that people are chosen to occupy higher positions. It is a milieu from which the power elite is chosen, in which the future members of the power elite are "educated." Traditions,

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ideology, and means of adaptation (some of them just as important as the ideology and connected with it) are all transmitted through this milieu to the successive members of the elite. It is a factor which unites different periods in the history of the new regime. Those who constitute the apparatus are the direct executors of the orders of the power elite, but at the same time the elite is to some extent dependent on them, since the power elite is supplemented from their ranks, and shares a common mentality and ideological formulae with them. In its decision-making, the leadership considers the presumed preferences of the *apparatchiki*, relies on the information supplied by them, and takes into account the methods which they have used to implement decisions taken thus far.

FOR a long time it has been said that the middle classes are particularly closely connected with the system within which they function: conservative ideologies are popular in the middle classes, and tendencies toward change are unpopular. The conservative role of the petty-bourgeoisie, and before that of the petty nobility, has often been discussed. But it is important to remember the difference between the situation of these two classes and the situation of the new middle class. The new middle class, the *apparatchiki*, is deprived of any economic independence: it is composed of paid functionaries. The nobleman, generally, was not a paid functionary, and neither was the petty-bourgeois. The economic dependence of the new middle class on the power elite leads to an increase in the conservative tendencies of the middle class, while the passive implementation of directives is generally consonant with the interests of this class, since the retention of their social status and possible advancement depend on obedience. On the other hand, the efficacy of the decisions taken by, and even the very survival of, the power elite, depend on the obedience of the *apparatchiki*, and the members of the elite try not to cause dissatisfaction on the part of their direct subordinates and the executors of their orders. In rare cases, the *apparatchiki* may threaten someone in the power elite, or even revolt, as happened in Poland in 1968. Their radicalism is then comparable to the particular radicalism of the German petty-bourgeoisie in the 1920s and 1930s. In general, they are obedient executors of the directives given them. A porcupine turned upside down may serve as a model of the psychology of *apparatchiki*: it is soft on top, and prickly from below.

Privileged Groups

Wanting to realize its goals effectively, the power elite wants to maintain a close connexion with the executors of its orders. This elite promotes a consonance of interests between itself and those who carry out its orders. Today, almost all the people are among the executors, but, as is well known, it is difficult to buy off everyone. It is necessary

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to concentrate the available means. So, the rulers act in such a way as to align themselves above all with those who work in key areas, first of all with activists in the hierarchies of the party, security, and propaganda. By controlling economic incentives, it is possible to provide privileges for persons active in these fields. There are privileges in the form of salaries and monetary prizes, and other types of privileges such as allowances (the allocation of resources without pay) and other social services. These services are distributed in such a way that various facilities (in the acquisition of apartments or the allocation of vacations) are distributed to those who are already favoured. There is also legal inequality with respect to certain groups more valuable for the power elite than the rest of society. This inequality is manifested in privileges in labour law and social security (tax exemptions, longer vacation times, earlier retirements and higher pensions, and a retirement system for professional soldiers and the police to which they do not contribute during their service). Let us add, however, that the position of those who belong to these privileged groups is especially perilous—both in cases of individual disobedience and in the event of an eventual, more radical change of the system. This heightened sense of danger constitutes the other side of the privileges received by members of these groups.

There are various degrees of interdependence between the citizen and the government, various degrees of docility and readiness to submission. Those who are employed directly by the state are thus more dependent on the government; members of the party—through their obligations—are more dependent on the authorities than those who do not belong to the party; and those who are privileged are more closely tied to the government than those who are not privileged. But we are speaking here only about various tendencies determined by various contracts, by means of which the authorities bind citizens to themselves. There are exceptions: there are people who are not bound to the state at all; and there are situations (rare, and connected with crises in the system) in which even those who were previously very submissive are ready to refuse obedience to the authorities.

Conflict

There might be (but does not have to be) a conflict between the goals of the citizens and of the various social strata, on the one hand, and the goals of the power elite as a whole or of some elements of it, on the other. We spoke of the interdependence between some occupational groups and the power elite and of the conservative tendencies of the middle strata, the functionaries. However, the main goal of the authorities—the retention of their position of power—often enters into conflict with the interests of specific groups or social strata, especially those situated lower in the hierarchy of power and privilege. This basic goal induces the leaders of the party to seek support from the police

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and from external forces; they spread the ideological veil, which does not facilitate clarity of vision even for them. The blindness of Wladyslaw Gomulka can be regarded as a metaphor, although it has been confirmed by medical authorities.

The desire to maintain power and the search for external allies, as well as ideological blindness, pose difficulties for the development of the economy and of culture, lead to a limitation of creative possibilities, and facilitate the destruction of social accomplishments. The realization of this basic goal means that sharing control with society and revision of past decisions becomes impossible.

The conflict between the power elite and society or specific social groups is not always conscious. The opposing sides of the conflict are usually conscious of their goals, but only rarely are they fully aware of the entire situation, and they do not always understand the role which they play in this situation.

The members of the power elite and the functionaries of the apparatus subjected to the elite have specific psychological characteristics, thanks to their careful selection. Even if they desire the good of the society (and this cannot be excluded), the way in which this good is understood and the means of realizing it are determined by their habits and through their ideology, and in particular by the way in which they view themselves and the society. Thus, in their view—even contrary to some Marxist conceptions—society should be passive, and all actions should be initiated by them alone: the leaders of the party, of the working class, and of the entire society. It is possible to see here a triumph of Lenin over Marx, a triumph of the Leninist conception of the communist party as a force shaping history. If something unforeseen by the leaders should occur in society, it fills them with fear and they try to counteract it. They believe that spontaneity is bad. Quite a few of the decisions taken by the authorities have as their goal the prevention of events not initiated by them; they try thus to insure themselves against spontaneity. At the same time, they try to leave their options open and unconstrained by legal guarantees, by the functioning of representative institutions, or by letting the citizens have some freedom. All of this has repercussions on the effectiveness of the system, on the degree to which people's needs are being satisfied, and on the quality of their lives.

The conflict may remain hidden; the power elite need not know that it is realizing its own goals against the wishes of the society; it does not have to know that its actions are not accepted. Moreover, all those affected by the decisions of the elite might be aware only of their own opposition, or of the opposition of those close to them, and not of what others might think and want. The latent consciousness of conflict, even if it is not revealed on an everyday basis, may, on both sides, become open in the case of more drastic actions by the power elite.

On the part of the society, this consciousness may take the form of

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rebellion or protest, generally weakly organized; on the side of the authorities it takes the form of an accusation of "counter-revolutionary" opposition. This is how the leaders describe the divergence between what they believe about the true needs of society, and what society itself supposedly thinks in this respect. After thus identifying a counter-revolutionary position, the leaders can dispatch the army to the place concerned, or foreign troops might be invited in.

To use a sociological metaphor, the conflicts may then reside in the collective subconsciousness of both sides. When they become open they lead to an eruption. When such a conflict, expelled from consciousness, occurs in an individual psyche, treatment is necessary. This seems equally necessary on a social level.

The way in which the conflict is conducted depends on, among other things, the organization of the two sides. The monopolization of the organizational resources by the ruling apparatus is a characteristic of the new order. Society does not organize itself—it is being organized: society is organized only to the extent and in the manner allowed. This means of organization serves to limit the spontaneity of social actions. Thus, we have, on the one hand, a collectivity of isolated individuals, and, on the other an organization functioning with the participation of the same or similar individuals. As participants in the organization they fulfil one of their social roles; they take part in the functioning of a system harmful to themselves or to others. In other roles they oppose this same system. These other roles are usually limited to social fraternization, and consist of private conversations in which one complains about what is happening, but does so only privately, outside the institutional system. Thus, the system is supported by people who, at different times and playing other roles, would tend to oppose it. If they oppose the system (partially), they do so as individuals, or, at most in crowds; if they support the system (again only partially), they do so as the functionaries in organizations (productive, administrative, "social," etc.) in which, if they do not execute orders directed against themselves personally they are nonetheless prepared to execute orders against others. Of course, not everyone can be entrusted with such orders, but, in general, it is always possible to find enough who are willing to obey. And even if the authorities were not capable of arranging everything by giving orders, then at least they can induce passivity. In any case, orders are not necessary in every case; sometimes non-compelling incentives are enough. If individuals sometimes think that something should be done independently of the government, they do not do it, knowing that it is difficult to act alone.

THESE are the factors on which the outcome of a conflict between the elite and other social strata might depend. The two sides are, as we have emphasized, not equally equipped. The power elite controls the state, the law, the means of production, the propaganda machine,

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the police, the army, and has external support. Effective administration demands, however, cooperation among the executors of orders. These executors might refuse—at least at times—to obey commands of which they do not approve. This insubordination can be used as an instrument of pressure against the authorities. A strike is just such a form of pressure. In turn, the larger the number of people who refuse simultaneously, the more effective will be the insubordination, but this depends on the possibility of coordinated action.

The realization of those goals of the power elite not consonant with the aspirations of society is more probable in a situation where the possibility of concerted actions by citizens is smaller. In turn, as the possibility of organization not directed from above and of exchange of information not transmitted from above becomes more limited, the chance of concerted action on the part of citizens grows smaller. Thus, the smaller these chances are, the fewer will be the elements of pluralism in the social system. These elements of pluralism presuppose the existence of centres of information and decision which are at least partially independent of the authorities.

The struggle may thus concern not only making decisions, but also limiting the authority of the power elite for the future, so that not everything it might attempt would be possible. The party and state authorities aspire to the situation in which the possibility that particular social groups might organize and inform themselves independently from the authorities is increasingly limited. It is in the interest of society to expand these possibilities, and—in spite of the fact that they act separately more often than together—this is the aim of these groups.

In Poznan, in June 1956, the slogan was "Bread and Freedom." In December 1970 and January 1971, the workers demanded not only a return to the old food prices, but also independent labour unions and the acceptance of strike committees as legal representatives of the workers. Edward Gierek said in Szczecin that the existing organizations (PUWP and the labour unions) were good enough and the existing organizations should be sufficient for the workers. Official propaganda was inflammatory at the time. On the coast there were demands for true information, for the removal of the propaganda smoke-screen which was especially irritating. The workers were not only concerned about the specific decision of the authorities, but also about the organizational possibilities of action and institutional guarantees. These demands were not fulfilled, but those who presented them—and not for the first time—knew that this had to be done. Without the fulfilment of social demands of this kind in the area of organization and information future conflicts between the authorities and society might take an even more dangerous form than had been the case thus far

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—more dangerous both for society and for representatives of the authorities.

Translated by Olga Amsterdamska

The Perspective

We consider that the expropriation of society from its right to organize itself and the resulting social atomization and destruction of social ties are the fundamental characteristics of a totalitarian system. Therefore the essential element of all actions for democracy *must be a social self-organization, i.e. the creation of self-governing* bodies, independent of the state, which will gather the majority, or at least a good part of our society.

Democracy and independence are clearly the goals and aspirations of the Poles. But such a programme cannot be realized directly; for the time being we all have to live in a totalitarian system. Under these conditions, the democratic movement would acquire a mass character only if people's aspirations are realized already here and now, inside this system . . . [through] self-organization of social groups and social bodies for the defence of their interests. The question arises why the authorities should tolerate such independent social action . . . [and] why society tolerates the authorities who have no social basis. This question is of course about the Soviet Union and its tanks . . . From the situation in which we find ourselves now to one in which Moscow will decide to intervene militarily there is some distance. And its length depends on the difficulties caused to the Soviet Union by the captive nations and by the enslaved Russians themselves, on the economic dependence on the West, and on the Chinese threat. All these factors are interlinked and are influenced also by our activity.

Jacek Kuron

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Freedom in the Camp *

Maciej Poleski

THIS is an attempt to analyse the nature of Polish reality. For the purpose of comparison, it may be useful to consider some recently expressed and strongly conflicting views of Soviet society. According to Solzhenitsyn communism is a tissue of evil forcibly implanted into the wounds inflicted by the revolution on the otherwise healthy body of Russia. As Zinoviev sees it, the face of Russia has been made to grow into a monstrous mask of Gogolesque nightmares so irretrievably that it is no longer possible to tell which is which. The Poles, well trained under the partitions and the occupation, can tell the mask from the face without difficulty. Life runs on two planes, the mask and the face coexist as alternating patterns. With the duality goes the characteristic preference for distracting themselves from their allotted roles, whether that of the ruler or the ruled. This makes it possible for Gierek to indicate, with a not altogether unconvincing wink: "You know how it is, there is the *apparat* and the security boys on one hand and the Russian tanks on the other: what can I do?" It is difficult to decide to what extent this ambivalence is a tool in the hands of the government (on the principle of turning the screw on and off as required), and to what extent it is a genuinely liberalizing element. It is satisfactory, for instance, to think that our distrust of any doctrine made Gomulka abandon collectivization. It is difficult, on the other hand, not to feel bitter on recalling that the same Gomulka has done less for us than Kadar has done for Hungary after arriving on a Soviet tank. Yet it was Gomulka who was given the people's confidence and support in exchange for protection against a Soviet invasion.

> Life on two planes makes for a double moral standard. . . . Two contradictory value systems are an established feature of the national ethos. One relates to everyday, practical matters and here we seem to be below the average for civilized countries. On the other hand, in the sphere of ideas and attitudes bearing on national independence and political life, we show a high degree of idealism and considerable resources of public spirit, unselfishness and courage.

This is what a PPN statement of December 1977 says. The underlying ambivalence works on two levels. This adds to its vitality and acceptability. It is symbolic, perhaps, that the first two novels to be printed illicitly on the government owned presses were called *Unreality* and *The Polish Complex*. It has been relatively easy, in the last 40

* This is a shortened version of the text which appeared in *Kultura* No. 4/379 (published in Paris).

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years, to be honest dishonestly and dishonest honestly depending which side of the national character had the edge at the time.

A degree of freedom within the condition of serfdom which is ours rests on a synthesis of our own brand of honesty with national common sense. Our serfdom is an exceptional condition: we have formal sovereignty but we have less economic autonomy than our ancestors had under the partitions. We do not feel under foreign occupation in our day-to-day transactions: we are ruled by *soi-disant* Poles: Bierut, Gomulka, Gierek. We have independence very much in the fashion of Vichy except that it extends to the whole country. We are no longer a truly totalitarian country: the balance between the fear felt by the governed and the terror exercised by the government has been disturbed. We are not a colony because the Russian metropolis, although sovereign, is even poorer and more deeply humiliated than ourselves. How then are we to define the world of our everyday existence? It seems to me that it is very much like a labour camp: a concentration camp in the communist mould. Both liberation of labour and concentration of production are, after all, the central myths of communism. Our camp has aged, the prisoners are old and so are the guards. In our camp poverty is more common than death and shouting more frequent than torture. Prisoners and guards play each other's roles as the unsteady camp foundations are about to give way under their feet. Although the camp is still growing in size and throws a vast shadow over the whole free world, it is no longer a monolithic nightmare. There is no longer a single commandant overall, nor one set of rules. The various zones disagree and fight about the way the boundary wires are made to run. It is uncertain how long the camp will last and in any case it has a time scale of its own. Gang terror has replaced the official variety: somewhere the guards beat up a prisoner, somewhere else they set fire to a shop or a money till. But it is not the same as it used to be: the guards have lost their self assurance and the prisoners are no longer in fear. The camp continues, living from day to day, but it is now free of illusions. No one believes that it could be improved; it is too late. It is still possible to perform passably as a prisoner with a special task or in charge of a unit but not as an efficient guard or a camp commandant. We, the prisoners, started considering the future and it is clear that, whatever happens, on the first day of freedom the informers, the concrete huts and the camp hospital will still be there. Slowly, we discard the last illusion: we shall not be freed from outside. Step by step, we become bolder, just as the prisoners of old. This is our world: if we are ever to be free within it, we must learn to know and to control it. But the camp will have to free itself.

WHAT were the German and Russian concentration camps like as seen through the eyes of their inmates? The prisoners had witnessed a process of adaptation through which they and their guards

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had to go to achieve a new common norm. However cruel this may sound, it seems that every seasoned prisoner in Auschwitz knew that he had a part to play and that his room for manoeuvre was contained within it. He knew also that on the other side the camp personnel had to contend with very similar limitations. Certain decisions had been made: one man preferred to join the SS and stay in the camp instead of being sent to the front, another preferred to become a *Kapo* to carrying stones, yet another chose to try to save his life by shirking. Instead, he could have behaved like an honourable prisoner and let himself be despatched to the crematorium. However, the moment of decision came only once, never to recur. After that, one's conduct, whether criminal, cruel and indifferent or noble, compassionate and humane was predetermined and had to remain within the confines of the once accepted role.

The ever present play mechanism continued: one could play a good or a bad SS man, a good or a bad *Kapo*, a good or a bad prisoner. How can a free person gauge any of this? Or understand the joy of being saved from hard labour for a time by being ordered to paint *Arbeit macht frei?* Equally, how can anyone believe that the commandant of Auschwitz developed a heart condition while there? Yet it has been confirmed by doctors who examined him in a Polish prison. Ultimately, the stress of not being able to fulfil Himmler's norm for murdered Jews was more than his heart could bear. It is known that members of the NKVD, unable to fulfil the plan for arrests of enemies of the people and members of the UB whose victims failed to confess suffered similarly. Both sides had to accept the camp, at least as a set of roles to play in order to survive. However absurd it may look from outside, each role in fact follows a logical course, logical, that is, within the camp universe. Those who survive without being broken only rarely dare to tell the basic truth that in the camp, life was only a make-believe; the real things were death and suffering. In Borowski's *World of Stone* victims and executioners shared this feeling of unreality: guards, who, having washed, were able to return to their homes and their girls; prisoners, when given a pass to the camp brothel or a chance to get to " canada." Canada was the terminus for trains carrying Jews and Gypsies who were to be taken to the gas chamber straight away. To the guards the " canada " people meant gold, to the prisoners they meant food. When robbing their victims, prisoners and guards felt that they were only taking something no longer of any use. The role-playing universe was totally integrated, everyone had a part, each part with a certain crime potential and none with a point of reference to the normal world.

Kielar, the Auschwitz prisoner No. 290, described in his book *Anus Mundi* the world of the veterans among the prisoners. Their rule for survival seems very close to our own rule for today: " never lean out, chum." As a prisoner of standing, Kielar had numerous opportunities

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to move up the camp ladder. He managed to avoid being given any jobs which carried responsibility (that of battering his underlings and being battered by his superiors) but he served for a time as clerk (*Schreiber*) which was the lowest non-manual work available. Kielar's book gave us some surprising insights. This, for instance: after about two years in the camp, one became, according to Kielar, almost safe. There was a tacit understanding among the SS men to leave the old hands alone. They pretended not to notice when they skipped work, they avoided selecting them for tougher jobs. The fact that prisoners and guards became, after a time, old acquaintances, helped some prisoners to acquire protectors among the SS. Kielar's camp was by no means all black, it was grey. Kielar describes as a good SS man the one who only pretended to search him before sending him to the isolator, although he could have found three jerseys and a book under the striped smock. Thanks to that man Kielar was able to spend the night reading a book by the light of a candle. A certain amount of illicit trading went on between the SS and the prisoners. Briefly, within the framework of its institutional abnormality the camp achieved a normality of its own.

On one occasion, the old prisoners organized a feast for themselves to celebrate the anniversary of their arrival at Auschwitz. They had French brandy, sardines for starters and oranges for dessert. The goodies came from canada where thousands of Jews from liquidated ghettos were unloaded every day. The sky above Auschwitz was black and greasy with smoke from the crematoria which worked day and night. The guests at the gruesome feast have thus reversed, in the circumstances of almost pure horror, the Shakespearian dictum about some who must watch while some must sleep. The SS, tired and sound asleep after their hunt for gold, had other preoccupations than the old hands' night revels.

One could, just, escape from a Nazi camp and there was somewhere to escape to. On this point, Soviet camps are much closer to our conditions. In *The Greenhorn and the Camp Whore,* a play he wrote in 1954 and subtitled "The Republic of Work," Solzhenitsyn demonstrated in great detail the workings of lies and corruption throughout camp life. The universal cheating went downward through the hierarchy from the commandant to the lowest labourer. Camp life was very much like Soviet normality writ small, and it developed spontaneously a pattern of activities and counter activities to deal with the circumstances. In Soviet gaols, as opposed to camps, the communist principle of everyone having to work to his utmost ability and earning as much as he needs applies; i.e. everyone is given enough food not to die, however black his case. The principle in the camps is utterly different. The Republic of Work rests on socialist, not on communist principles: the pay fits the work. So that prisoners cut down as much timber as possible, norms are set down for work

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and for food. Less timber cut, less food given: the prisoner is moved down the rationing ladder. The system in its pure form is, of course, an abstraction, although it does, in practice, finish off the weakest and the most resourceful soon enough. Rather naturally, prisoners have no trust whatsoever in the planners' integrity; death from exhaustion is too close. Each victim is well aware that, had he even reached the heights of the third (highest) ration, he could not sustain the effort for any length of time. So it follows that the prisoners have to organize a coherent fraud scheme to fit reality into the planners' fiction. The logs become smaller, they are hollow inside but there are more of them. The guards know the scheme and the methods but their bonus also depends on the numbers produced. Their aim is to maintain sufficient real output to safeguard the fiction of increased production. Thus the Republic of Work enters the transitional stage between socialism and communism: to everyone according to what his work seems to be and the clever ones can arrange the rest according to their needs.

THE Polish zone of the camp reached the transition stage very early. We ceased to think of ourselves as pure and innocent victims of evil guards a long time ago. We witnessed, after all, the guards becoming victims and victims turning into guards. Our social hierarchy creates a ladder of conformisms. At each step up it is possible to console oneself with the thought that the person on the step above must have behaved worse to have got that high, while those below us may have behaved better but with little success. Only those content with very little can afford a clear conscience, and it is not right to expect the whole nation to be content with that. Perhaps that is why among activists of the opposition there are few who never tried to climb the ladder. The game of intangibles goes on all the time: every minister admits in private that he accepted his post only to prevent someone more compromised than he from getting it. The reasoning behind it would do for a *Kapo* and is inconceivable outside the camp categories. Equally, only in that framework is it understandable that a prisoner would go and vote for his guards: his not voting would not change the situation a jot. Within the system, personal responsibility is a fiction, a figment of a play. A few were able to leave their parts: Father Kolbe in Auschwitz, Bukovsky, Shcharansky and many others in Soviet camps. Only a belief in the transcendental meaning of sacrifice made that kind of courage possible.

It is difficult to establish in the Polish zone a sound basis for protest. After all, the populace no longer has to spend their days holding slogan boards in weakened hands and exhausting their throats with cheers. It is perfectly easy to arrange, with a wink, to be absent in fact but present on paper during Community Effort Days or May

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Day processions. One is no longer expected to profess belief or even to pretend to do so. The guards demand only the very minimum, an acceptance of one's role.

Thus a worker who works in fact on his own, moonlighting full time, comes to the factory on pay day to divide his wage between the foreman and the other member of the two-man crew who, together, cover up for him. Academics report on research which never took place and develop future projects around the non-existing work just to fulfil the plan. A self-employed man, threatened by the tax collector, takes a state job for a year and buys a car and a house "out of salary saved" at the end of it. Hundreds of civil engineers design constructions twice as heavy as needed just to be on the safe side. It makes for speed and leaves them with more time for profitable work on the side. Writers take inane so-called editorial jobs or publish the same piece again and again under different titles. Doctors in the Health Service sell hospital beds and ask well-dressed patients on their first visit whether they would not prefer to be treated privately.

Why is it that people work at a snail's pace in the public sector and at the best Stakhanovite rate when they work for themselves? Is it a symptom of health or of demoralization? In a normal society it would indicate dishonesty but within the camp rules it simply demonstrates a triumph of reality over doctrine. We shall now try to establish the real relationship in our economy between work, pay and employment.

The productivity of Polish workers is appallingly low. Nobody has actually said how low, neither the government nor the opposition. But to take just one example: the construction conglomerate which is building Ursynow, a new quarter of Warsaw, built one flat per worker per year. Thus productivity reached the level of earnings. These official earnings of course bear no relation to the cost of labour in the free market. One hour of skilled work costs at present between 50 and 100 zlotys. No skilled work is obtainable under 50 zlotys per hour. This applies to agricultural workers, to car mechanics, to teachers giving private lessons, to dentists, plumbers and journalists. The price is not on offer, it has remained at this level for some time. It excludes extreme rates, such as 35 zlotys per hour for standing in a queue or 500 zlotys for a visit to a well-known medical specialist. The rate of 50 to 100 zlotys per hour is a realistic measure of demand and supply. It mirrors real trends and standards in the economy. Degrees and paper qualifications are of no importance, nor is there any difference between manual and other work. What matters is the real demand and the skills available. At these rates, it takes an hour's work to buy a kilogram of meat and a month to buy a cubic metre of housing space. The proportions are about right, similar relations are common among most industrialized nations. Where the relation is artificially altered, as for instance in the case of bread prices, the immediate effect

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is waste. There are containers for dry bread installed in every new housing block as a matter of course. Until they were provided, bread was simply thrown away. Real productivity is related to the level of exploitation of the citizen-prisoner by the gulag state. Everyone who can earns on the side, legally or not, very often by fiddling overtime and otherwise manipulating the earning at his or her official place of work. These exploits do not, of course, improve economic prospects. Even some private work has become simply a more profitable figment of the state fiction. It is worth considering how much the same people would have earned if they worked efficiently under decent conditions. Assuming a five-day week and the rate between 50 and 100 zlotys per hour, an average skilled worker would earn between 8,888 and 17,600 zlotys per month. This is the same as they are earning now with all the moonlighting and fiddles. It is generally recognized that a civilized minimum sum for each member of a family is a figure around 2,500 zlotys per month. It would be much higher if not for the overemployment of women. 17,600 zlotys is certainly not too high if we relate it to the price of shoes (700–2,500 zlotys), a suit (3,000–6,000 zlotys), or to the free market price of the cheapest Polish car (120,000–140,000 zlotys), not to mention the price of food.

The third factor in our equation besides productivity and prices is employment. Criticism of its level and attempts to relate it to other factors provoke, inevitably, a defensive mechanism into action. No one wants to lose his job or to be told that he is not really needed. Nonetheless it is obvious to anyone who looks around that we have too many bureaucrats and too few skilled craftsmen. The present situation is a direct effect of full employment as practised in the camp. In the short term, the desks and wages of penpushers cost less than equipping a well organized workshop. There is also a trend away from hard and exacting jobs to employment which requires no effort, even if it is ridiculously low paid. And, as the legitimate, official earnings bear no relation to the cost of living and have to be supplemented by other, more or less illicit, sources of income, this is only natural. The adage " In Poland citizens pretend that they work and the state pretends that it pays them " is becoming truer every day. There are, of course, many people who work for next to nothing because they are not able to find ways of making money on the side and these people are desperately poor. While this confirms the scale of our economic tragedy, it in no way detracts from the truth of the preceding argument.

The fiction of the camp is so firmly established that the prisoners are even prepared to defend it in anticipation of changes for the worse. An old makeshift arrangement seems preferable to one new and untried. Within the existing framework, guards and prisoners have, for better or worse, come to terms.

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LET us return, however, to the initial argument. Poland is only a fragment of the prison camp which will not be liberated from outside but has to free itself. Poles will be free when Czechs, Hungarians, East Germans, Ukrainians, Lithuanians and Belorussians are free. In this context it is often said that China is far away and the Russian tanks are close. The ever present "tank dilemma" needs certainly to be considered.

There are two main reasons for caution and against provoking in any way a Soviet invasion. Firstly, besides the ordinary humane considerations, the healthy instinct for preservation tells us not to risk another bleeding of the nation, which would inevitably weaken the radical independence movement. Secondly, we are not in the position of those who have nothing to lose. The formal structure of independence protects us at least a little against total Sovietization. While we have security prisons, we have neither labour camps nor psychiatric hospitals which in fact are prisons.

These are the arguments for caution, supported by historical experience. There are no others: the talk of the total extermination of the Poles by the USSR, or of the incorporation of Poland into the USSR as its 17th republic can be dismissed as science fiction tales. Not because our adversary is righteous by nature but because he does not wish to increase his already severe ethnic difficulties. It is this which limits the likelihood of the USSR deploying force.

The argument for standing up to the USSR goes as follows: firstly, the Russian tanks did not change matters for the worse either in Budapest in 1956 nor in Prague in 1968, if we bear in mind the nature of the pre-revolt governments of Rakosi and Novotny. If we assess the political balance only, disregarding the cost in human terms, Hungary and Czechoslovakia gained overall despite the invasion. There are no analogies to be drawn here between the drama of Budapest and the tragedy of Warsaw in 1944.

Secondly, Soviet invasions are not the work of Fate but the result of common-sense calculations. Particularly in the case of Czechoslovakia, invasion came after a long hesitation. One of the factors under consideration was the likelihood of military resistance. Dubcek's rejection, beforehand, of the use of force, had tipped the scales against him. Psychologically, the threat of invasion is more useful to Moscow than invasion itself. Clearly, an invasion of a country already within the Moscow sphere of interests is bound to prove an embarrassing operation which would have to rely on blackmail to a large extent. It will be prudent on our part, until the moment of final paralysis or disintegration of the Soviet empire to conduct our campaign with ammunition which would not warrant the use of tanks. If the Polish opposition manages to profit from the ambivalence of our situation and also to tolerate the presence of our guards until a suitable moment, the Russians will not intervene. Until that time it is better to force the

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existing government into making significant concessions, thus furthering the objectives of the opposition than to try to take over a country not truly sovereign. These tactics mean, however, a final farewell to the dreams of reforming socialism. In no way do we desire to revitalize the existing system. What we want is to manoeuvre the authorities into carrying out the opposition objectives. All partial reforms must be looked at from this point of view.

Our argument, which may appear at first glance close to an abstraction, can be illustrated by events of the past few years.

The party intended to change the Constitution, replacing Bierut's artefact by another. Democratic spirit was equally absent from both and it was ironical that the democratic opposition had been driven into defending a Stalinist constitution. Formally, the opposition lost the battle. The party won its point and we now have a constitution which orders us to love the Soviet Union. But in the process of stripping bare the fiction of the party's constitutional campaign, the opposition forced the authorities to consider seriously paragraphs which were never before taken seriously by anyone. The game which until then was played according to the rules made by the guards, has become the prisoners' game.

The opposition accused the authorities of disregard for human rights. Formally nothing has changed as a result. We still have the UB, censorship and the police. But in fact more has changed than in 1956, although after October the UB was purged and some periodicals ceased to be censored for a while. The present campaign has brought us infinitely more: a portion of our press (i.e. *samizdat*) is now genuinely free and the government has to tolerate its existence. Every attempt to separate fiction from reality and lies from truth helps to extend and enforce the toleration of truth, even if many lies still survive.

There is no reason why the same tactics should not succeed in other spheres. The underlying ambivalence of our existence has, so far, prevented an open discussion of the economy. There are fewer and fewer people keen on exploding the established fiction which has managed, after much trouble, to encompass our daily life. Not wishing to engage in unpopular issues, the opposition proffers generalized demands for the reconstruction of the free market economy. In our view, those demands can acquire political weight only after fiction and reality have been understood for what they are. While supporting the existing self-defence activities, the opposition should also set about explaining the essence of prison camp economics. Detailed expert analysis would demonstrate how existing structures could be adjusted to genuine market conditions. Instead of supporting, however unwittingly, the established lie by advancing claims which fall within fictional terms of reference, the opposition should exert pressure on the authorities to utilize the real existing market structures. It would mean a demand for gradually linking pay with productivity, which, after pay increases,

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could at last be brought under control. There is no point, in our situation, in encouraging the growth of consumption or in undertaking large investments. Accepting and legalizing economic changes already accomplished would make it possible to remove without further expenditure the reasons for the unproductive and back-breaking effort which the country has had to support for so long. Instead of condemning the black market and trying to reform the white i.e. official market, the opposition should concentrate on what Raymond Aron has called the "grey market." The grey market comprises semi-legal but tolerated operations by private and state institutions, or persons. These have enabled the economic bureaucracy to survive, if only just. Up to now, opposition statements seem to suggest a belief that Poland's economy is a form of state capitalism. This in fact is so to only a limited extent. The peasant farmers, the craftsmen and tradesmen, the small producers' cooperatives, the workers in privately owned workshops and many professional people work outside the public sector. The opposition should realize the importance of increasing numbers of private sector producers and consumers. The intelligentsia among the bureaucrats should try to mollify its traditional dislike of the private sector world. It must be said that at present that world is very much under UB control and politically it is inactive. None the less, they are one of the few groups who actually work and work effectively, showing genuine initiative and ability to organize. There is no reason to pillory them, while shielding the rank-and-file party members, whose reliability and usefulness are even more questionable. The opposition should always bear in mind the need to build up an alternative to the official world. Looked at from that perspective the private sector gains further in importance. At a time of crisis or rebellion it will be essential to have as many people as possible not dependent on the monopolistic employer.

It is clear that the central tactical need in the campaign for the liberation of the camp is the universal awareness of the game played by guards and prisoners. The camp will be able to liberate itself if the independence movement succeeds in making the alternative world stronger and more vigorous than the official one. This would overcome the dilemma of all oppositions under totalitarianism: that of being no more than a mirror of the government.

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Poland—1984 *

Marek Turbacz

IT is my intention to attempt a prognosis for the next few years, inevitably a somewhat hazardous undertaking.

I choose to close at 1984, the date made ominous by Orwell and Amalrik. In conflict with Amalrik, I predict that during this period the world situation will remain in large measure stable which makes a prognosis for our own country feasible.

My case is based on the assumption that the Poland of 1984 will not differ greatly from the Poland of today. There is only a small chance, to my mind, that either the political structure of the country or the methods of government will change. The opposition can, however, try to modify at least the latter. There is no chance of our being able to step out of the general framework but it should be possible to influence the overall colour of the picture so that it may get lighter rather than darker.

The Recent Past

1976 and 1977 were crisis years for the PPR (Polish People's Republic) perhaps the most important of all the crises it has passed through. This one was precipitated by the growing impatience of the hostile intelligentsia distressed by the rapid disappearance of the little thaw of 1971 and provoked into action by the proposed alteration of the Constitution. The workers' revolt of 1976 and the traumatic effect of repressions which followed brought the discontent into the open.

In 1956, the general relaxation brought with it hopes of a change within the system. A victory of the liberal faction and a loosening of restrictions in response to economic pressures were to follow the rejection of " errors and distortions " by the party, or so it was believed. Since 1956 sporadic outbreaks of resistance and protest tended to take the form of appeal to the good will of the authorities. The country as a whole was never aroused out of apathy and the attitude of public detachment contributed to the dissipation and loss of the concessions won in 1956 and again in 1971. The short-lived explosions of 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976 were not enough in themselves to produce the continuity of organized pressure on the authorities.

In 1976 and 1977 resistance became widespread and continuous. Instead of appealing to the good will and sense of the authorities, the opposition faced them with phenomena such as KOR, the free publishing movement and the Students' Solidarity Committees.

There is a new awareness that it is possible to change our world from inside, and that unless we do so ourselves, we shall have to continue

* This is a shortened version of the text which appeared in *Zapis* No. 6 (published in London by *Index on Censorship*).

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as we are. This at least is the attitude of the opposition, which is admittedly still only a fraction of the population. The future of the system and the future of the country depends largely on the speed with which the opposition grows.

The Party Leadership

The policy of the leadership is unlikely, I think, to alter during the period in question. It is improbable that we shall have a major thaw of liberalization or structural changes. It is also unlikely that the screw will be tightened very much more, although, on balance, this is more probable than extensive liberalization.

The policy of Gierek and his team serves their own immediate interests rather than those of the rest of the country. It enables Gierek to retain power but it conflicts with the long-term interests of the communist regime itself. For the system to have a better chance of lasting stability and of survival, it would have to become considerably more acceptable to the mass of the people.

To gain neutrality, let alone a measure of support from the majority, the authorities would have to satisfy the following objectives:

—a consistent improvement of living standards,
—improved supplies, particularly of meat and consumer goods,
—improved housing standards,
—better working conditions in industry,
—unhampered development of peasant farming and
—assured neutrality of the Church.

They would also have to refrain from moves which offend national feelings (such as changing the Constitution or closing the production of Mickiewicz's *Forefathers' Eve*). All this Gierek hoped to do, but it became clear that, in Poland, to achieve these objectives more fundamental changes, not only economic but also political, were essential. In particular, it would be necessary to establish a measure of popular control of the executive at all levels. Economic improvements would have to be accompanied by a controlled political thaw: democratization, more freedom of speech, the introduction of genuinely autonomous workers' organizations. Certain modifications of the regime are indeed possible, even under the continuing Russian domination and the political monopoly of the party. That kind of thaw took place in Russia after Stalin's death, in Poland in 1956 and to a lesser degree in 1971. The 1956 concessions, both in Poland and the USSR, proved to be ultimately to the advantage of the authorities. They stabilized the system by achieving a measure of public neutrality, if not acceptance. It has to be noted that while some of the reforms of the time acquired permanence, others were quickly withdrawn.

At present the authorities are under the threat of another workers' revolt: the opposition has a chance to grow and it can rely on the

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silent support of the majority. Communist rule is kept in existence by the threat of Soviet invasion. Memories of Hungary and Czechoslovakia subdue liberal tendencies within the party, prevent many uncommitted people from joining the opposition and keep alive a pervading sense of helplessness. If it were not for the threat of Russian intervention the Polish communist order would more than likely collapse. As it is, the government has to depend increasingly on the USSR which, while welcome to the Russians and useful to them, is detrimental to the interests of the Polish party.

There is no question of Gierek and his team initiating a thaw as an act of faith either in the national interest or to improve the viability of the system. Gierek, while not a strong-arm man is not a liberal either, and he does not consider a major relaxation to be to his advantage. He has no immediate need of it to stay in power, and in any case, it would be hazardous and difficult to achieve with safety: in all likelihood the relaxation would not be acceptable to the USSR. Russia tolerates the present situation, but it does not follow that it would suffer it to go any further. Poland must not be allowed to differ over much from most countries in the bloc. The thaw would also be opposed by many in the party *apparat* and the police, whose power it would curtail. The government might also have to account for its own mismanagement, wasted credits, economic blunders, the 1976 repressions and the immoderate personal gains enjoyed by the leadership. In brief, were Gierek to attempt a major thaw he might easily jeopardize his own political survival.

To tighten the screw would also be hazardous and it would certainly displease public opinion in the West which is still up to a point behind Gierek. Gierek needs Western support for both prestige and political reasons. To be compromised in the eyes of the West would threaten the prospects of further economic aid. This, bearing in mind Poland's economic dependence on the West, would lead to another crisis, which in turn might easily precipitate another workers' revolt, and Gierek's fall.

" Tightening the screw " may, however, occur if the nationalist and repressive elements in the party leadership come to the top. It may also come about on the initiative of the security services lower down the scale. In certain circumstances, the leadership which relies so much on the security services may not feel able to put a stop to it, even if it were aware that a rule of terror would be against its own interests and policy.

At present, the balance between various factions in the party leadership appears more or less secure. The position of Gierek and the conservatives seems firm and Gierek's going before 1984 is not likely, unless there is another workers' revolt.

The authorities can afford at present to leave the opposition alone. Its existence does not menace them directly and a threat of its liquida-

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tion might prove infinitely more dangerous. The fact that the existence of the opposition threatens the system in the long run by undermining totalitarian assumptions seems of minor importance to the present government.

The official anti-opposition tactics show a degree of skill and intelligence. The police collect information in order to keep themselves in readiness and try to keep down the independent publishing movement. They harass the activities of the Flying University and maintain a controlled level of repression sufficient, in their view, to prevent either an explosion or a further growth of the opposition.

The People

We cannot expect a radical change in political attitudes before 1984 and there is little chance of a mass resistance movement developing against the system. The process of psychological change and the spread of a new awareness is bound to be slow. The age group now at the peak of activity has been shaped, inevitably, by the post-war historical environment and it bears its mark. The totalitarian communist government governs against the people yet is of the people in one sense: its members come from a great variety of social backgrounds. This is one innovation, radical and advantageous from their point of view, which our all-nation ruling party introduced. The immediate effect was to decompose the nation, to create a situation more complex and difficult in many ways than under the partitions and the occupation, when national cohesion increased in face of the common enemy.

Patriotism and the habit of resisting foreign domination are essential parts of the Polish national make-up. Other characteristics (some dating from the era of the "golden liberty" of the gentry, others from the days of the partitions) include antagonism to all authority and persistent individualism. That is where we differ from the Russians. But the concept of the political rights of the individual, of democracy, local autonomy and tolerance are not essential elements of an ordinary Pole's political awareness. That differentiates us from the Americans, the British or the Norwegians and it brings us closer to the Russians. Freedom to a normal Pole means freedom from prohibitions rather than freedom to exercise rights. Poles have been deprived of democratic institutions and political freedom ever since the end of the eighteenth century, except for a short and difficult period between 1918 and 1926. The earlier tradition of the freedom of the gentry operates now entirely as an element of the national mythology and not as a model of behaviour. In any case, the democracy of the gentry deteriorated into a caricature with the advent of the *liberum veto* and weakening of the executive. Ultimately it became one of the main reasons for Poland's fall. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Poland missed the development of democratic institutions while the rest of

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Europe experienced the emancipation of the masses and the formation of modern nations.

It is still true that patriotism means more to a Pole of today than democracy, political freedom or political autonomy. The post-war material and social advance of the peasant masses, as a result of agricultural reform and industrialization, only contributed to the mood of political apathy. The small but politically active old working class was engulfed in the process. A new intelligentsia, largely of peasant origin, was formed. Naturally, a group in the process of moving up the social ladder is not inclined to rebel and put its recent gains at risk. The peasant masses have not undergone political emancipation in the way their Western counterparts have. For the great majority the matters of importance are still consumption, freedom of religion and national independence (in the formal sense in which this exists in today's Poland, i.e. a Polish government, Polish language and a Polish Army).

Social mobility has, however, been severely curtailed in the more recent past and the country is reverting to a pattern of rigid social stratification. As people are becoming aware of this their political attitudes change and their views come closer to those of the opposition.

Sociological research indicates that the generation born in the 1950s tends towards social disengagement and a preference for the pursuit of strictly personal goals. They grew up during the period of "political silence," with its absence of organized opposition. In those days to be politically engaged meant to be engaged on the side of the system. On the other hand, the same work indicates that patriotism remains one of the highest ranking values among the young. It is difficult to predict to what extent the "non-joining" attitude is permanent and whether the work of the opposition may alter it.

Opposition

To what extent have the last few years and the presence of open and vocal opposition affected the consciousness of the nation?

The answer is by no means clear. The majority, while solidly anti-government, remain politically apathetic. It would be perhaps surprising were it otherwise and the surface inactivity does not by any means preclude a process of changing consciousness. Undoubtedly, as the people are faced with new models of conduct, fear and feelings of impotence and helplessness recede. Certainly an attitude of good will towards the opposition appears to be universal.

The principal objectives of the opposition are:

—To form new national consciousness.
—To originate independent social associations and structures.
—To promote independent cultural life and political and philosophical inquiry.
—To evolve political and cultural elites.

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—To press for the evolution of the existing political structures and practices.

During the period under scrutiny the opportunities to realize the last objective seem to me negligible. There is no reason to believe that structural changes will take place, nor that alterations of political practices are likely. There is no chance of significant change in the USSR and the opposition will not have enough time to develop sufficient internal political pressure on the government.

The opposition has to accept that its work is a long haul. It would be irresponsible to include sovereignty and parliamentary democracy among the short-term objectives. This, undoubtedly, makes the task of the opposition more difficult: the step-by-step rebuilding of national consciousness has less immediate appeal than a call for democracy and independence. People, as a rule, are stirred to personal sacrifice only either by great religious, national and political ideas or else by a very concrete goal, close at hand.

The utmost we can hope for before 1984 is, first, the recognition by the system that the opposition is here to stay as a permanent element of the political situation and secondly, that there will be a virtual cessation of repressive practices.

The existence of the opposition is in itself a factor in evolving a new social awareness. Even the dissemination of independent political ideas and information comes second to the broadcasting of the facts of the opposition's existence and achievements. Great numbers of people learn about it by listening to foreign radio stations and it gives them a new and demanding model of behaviour as well as demonstrating that it is possible to achieve success working against rules imposed by the system.

Unless there is another period of political terror ahead of us, the opposition will have to continue work along present lines and to extend its reach.

I do not expect to see the independent trade union movement accepted before 1984. I do not believe, either, that the country as a whole will be ready before that date for the formation of independent political parties. This also will require more time and a further drive by the opposition.

The very sudden spurt of protest we have witnessed recently was due to the tapping of the latent energy of those willing and ready. The pace cannot be maintained without a pause for consolidation and planning. Only another explosion could, I think, alter the situation radically. Traumas of that order bring to the surface feelings and thoughts buried up to that time under a carapace of apathy and silence and they enable a new activity to be released and new movements to evolve. They precipitate the course of events. Another explosion (such as a workers' revolt or a students' riot on a national scale) could lead to a renewed rule of terror and to the silencing of the opposition. On the other hand,

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it might result in extensive liberalization or, at least, in the rapid growth of the opposition. Such an explosion may occur for a number of reasons, including another sharp price rise. The opposition should utilize to the best of its ability the intervening time of relative calm to prepare itself and the nation for a possible confrontation with the authorities. It means initiating and coordinating the joint activity of workers and intelligentsia, more publishing, building up the habit of action and the discipline of competence.

We cannot rely on an early victory. Being in the opposition movement means, however, that we challenge the system in the name of fundamental moral values and we claim for ourselves the highest degree of freedom attainable in our circumstances.

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Alternatives for the 1980s

Jan Szczepanski

The position of Professor Jan Szczepanski, the internationally known Polish sociologist, towards the struggle of the opposition has been characterized by a certain coolness, ever since he withdrew his signature from the famous "letter of 34" against the censorship and the persecution of Polish culture. His attitude has remained highly ambiguous both in his public articles and in his more explicit statements circulated in samizdat, *one of which is reproduced below. It is followed by a sharp polemic by Jacek Bochenski which appeared in full in the* samizdat *magazine* Zapis (*No. 2, 1977*). *Bochenski deals with the delicate problem of collaboration with the communist regime, which is also the subject of the polemic between Piotr Wierzbicki and Adam Michnik in the following two articles, which are abridged from* Zapis (*No. 9 1979*).

THE difficulties of the late 1970s brought out sharply problems which had remained unresolved since the war and particularly since the six-year plan and the rejection of the economic and administrative proposals of the Central Planning Office. Underlying it all is the lack of work motivation and the disparity between productivity and pay. The socialist economy, having abolished the basic capitalist motivation of economic necessity and personal gain, has failed to evolve an equally successful way of making men work hard and effectively. Why indeed should they work while it is possible to arrange one's affairs rather better without working? The question may sound simplistic, yet in our economy only people on piece work receive pay reasonably related to the amount of effort they put in.

What are the chances of a solution, i.e. a rapid improvement in economic organization and a reform of the relationship of pay to prices which would result in prices becoming real prices and pay becoming real pay? It would require standardizing and simplifying the pay structure so that a worker would understand what he was paid for and, secondly, linking pay with productivity. Is this feasible? Hardly, and it is certainly unlikely to come about in the '80s. It is also unlikely that planning and economic management can be improved after the experience we had in the '70s of the ups and downs of reformist attempts.

I am inclined to think that in the early '80s the economy will continue on the general principle of hoping for the best until a traumatic shock leads to the introduction of radically different methods of planning, administration and management. Any reform is bound to

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bring a degree of disorganization but if pursued firmly it may improve the economic situation.

The politics of the '80s will of course continue the pattern of the '70s. I do not expect any important changes in domestic politics despite the growing conflict of polarized forces. The visit of the Pope may set off the growth of a strong Catholic political movement. It has certainly brought out the political potential of Catholicism. We should expect a strong Catholic political line, exerting an effective influence on the internal policy of the party.

As far as socialist democracy is concerned, no change, I think. Unless it were to be forced on the government by a serious crisis. In no case will the petrified political forms, sanctified by ideology, be structurally altered.

The principle of the directing role of the party will remain and the party will not be prepared to transfer any of its political power to representative institutions. The Seym will continue to have no political or economic influence and its decisions will not be binding either on the party or the government. Nor is the party likely to allow any chairmen of village fire brigades to be elected without the party's consent.

The opposition groups such as KOR will exhaust themselves in futile campaigning under conditions of quasi tolerance. Their activities will result in the growth of political literature and no more than that. The socialist way of life will continue along present lines to confirm that the socialist *Produktionsweise* can coexist with the capitalist *Lebensweise*. Where then will the power base lie in the '80s? Unfortunately, I have to assume that the system will continue to rely on the military for its protection: the army will still provide the shield the authorities require. Neither the economy, nor policy *per se*, nor science nor technology will be able to measure up to the productivity, innovative abilities, administrative efficiency and initiative of the developed capitalist countries.

Attempts to increase consumption, very much as in the '70s, will not be tied to productivity or efficiency but to privileges, moonlighting, illegal earnings and private arrangements undermining the public sector. I do not expect any great improvement in general moral standards. Neither the Church nor the state has been able so far to reduce alcoholism, corruption, fraud or the illicit rush to get rich quick. The sense of responsibility will remain defective and the Poles will go on accusing everyone but themselves of being the source of all political ills: the USSR, the party, the government, all other countries and Germany above all. The situation is not particularly new in our history.

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Belief and Calculation

Jacek Bochenski

IN issue No. 8 (714) of the Warsaw weekly *Kultura* (2 February 1977) there appeared an article by Jan Szczepanski entitled "The intellectuals' belief." I would first like to give a brief summary of the argument.

The author deals with "the behaviour of intellectuals towards the authorities." He maintains that this behaviour has "down the ages always shown certain common characteristics." From the moment states came into existence, three kinds of relationship between "intellectuals" and "rulers" can be distinguished. Scribes, clerks, magi, priests, soothsayers, astrologers and "wise men," as well as jesters, writers, lawyers, theologians, in more recent times "experts," in the past artists, philosophers and scholars, all served their rulers with their knowledge, honouring them with their art or their brilliant intellects. The second kind of relationship, dating from the time the universities came into existence, was one of conflict: as early as the thirteenth century intellectuals began to claim a right to wield power. For instance, astrologers justified their claims by the fact that they could read the future in the stars, while "philosophers of the eighteenth century justified their political ambitions by their knowledge of the laws of nature." The third kind of attitude on the part of intellectuals consisted of "an appraisal of government action and protest against what they felt to be unworthy or undesirable." The author states that what interests him is precisely this third attitude, as well as its source and motivation.

There are also three kinds of source and motivation. First, intellectuals may regard themselves as defenders of cultural values, of learning, art, philosophy, even technology, and protest against any alleged threat to these values on the part of the authorities. It is particularly in countries "which for a long time have been deprived of national sovereignty, and where the founders of culture played an important role in preserving national identity, their activities supporting the forces necessary to regain political independence," that intellectuals can come to believe that their interests "are also the interests of the country and state."

Secondly, there are those among them who, like Socrates, believe they have a *daimonion* within them (the ultimate measure of all values) and listen to his instructions, feeling themselves to be the guardians, not so much of the interests of national culture, as morality, justice or truth. Here the author warns that the moral feelings of intellectuals who sign protest letters, are exploited for their own ends by "various political groups," as a result of which it is in effect hard for intel-

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lectuals to know if they are listening to their own *daimonion* only or acting in the interests of these groups.

Thirdly, these protests are caused by "disillusionment," which Szczepanski interprets in the widest sense, but which, as we can see, he surely considers a more common or more important motivation than the others. We are concerned with the disillusionment of people once involved in a certain political movement, strongly associated with its ideological direction and convinced that the movement embodies "those values which intellectuals ought to serve." Belief is an enormous motive force behind man's activities: "a believer cannot be bribed, nor intimidated, nor convinced; he can only be arrested or killed." (But "rulers, mindful of the experiences of history, steer very clear of repression.") In general, however, "rulers" understand the "realities of politics," which intellectuals understand imperfectly. The intellectual therefore feels "disillusioned because politics do not fulfil his ideas in the way he had imagined." Politics have their "technical necessities," whereas the intellectual, "even a believer," always retains his "creative abilities" and his "belief in internal autonomy," and furthermore "must solicit favourable opinion, particularly from his fellow intellectuals." It is because of this that when his ideals are not fulfilled, when he is disillusioned and subject to pressure from his circle of friends, he experiences tragedy. He is not only "morally disillusioned," but "intellectually ruined," since "he had not shown himself to be sufficiently intelligent to perceive reality immediately." To salvage his good name, he makes efforts at expiation, i.e. he opposes the "policies that have let his beliefs down and made him look ridiculous in the eyes of his fellows."

"This mechanism of shattered beliefs," Professor Szczepanski finally assures us, "has been present down the ages . . . as have the two other mechanisms described above."

I AM taking the good intentions of the article's author for granted. I think Professor Szczepanski himself is an intellectual free of that deceptive "belief" of which he is sceptical, and that he is really intelligent and understands perfectly the "political reality" controlling —amongst other things—censorship. Since he has acknowledged that he should come out in defence of his "disillusioned" friends, he could not have been guided by any *daimonion's* instructions but undoubtedly by clear-headed calculation. And what has he figured out? Well, what one usually figures out in such a calculation, i.e. to abandon to some extent such values as truth in order to be able to speak out openly at all.

I intend to dwell a little on the intellectual consequences of this calculation.

If anyone wishing to write about the relationship between protesters and authorities in our country wants to pass the censor he must respect

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at least two iron-clad rules: (1) the authorities are right; (2) one cannot disclose exactly who is protesting and about what. How can one write then, when one cannot say what the problem is anyway?

In order to deal with this difficulty, Szczepanski has created a general scheme of the attitude of " intellectuals " towards " rulers," a scheme that holds good for all historical cases (but which at the same time is totally fictitious), suggesting that this attitude has " throughout the ages " been the same everywhere. In Szczepanski's scheme there is no differentiation between different kinds of authority. Authority is amorphous, but to some extent natural, always legitimate, unchanging, unshakeable by nature, a kind of divinely sanctioned absolute. It is the same, irrespective of the time and place in which it exists. From this point of view, it appears that Athenian democracy does not differ from Persian monarchy and the role of " intellectuals " in both places depends most clearly on their own capricious nature. Since historical epochs have no meaning, the " ruler " Charlemagne will not differ from the " ruler " de Gaulle. The first had a prancing " intellectual " clown (honouring the king), the second a prancing " intellectual " Jean-Paul Sartre (signing protest letters). But perhaps de Gaulle remembered the experiences of history and " steered very clear of repression," whereas we do not know whether Charlemagne did or not. However, there is no doubt that all " rulers " understand the realities of politics, which means that the fact that they will triumph in their disputes with " intellectuals " is generally a foregone conclusion. But " intellectuals " have to be understood particularly with respect to their disillusionment.

It is my opinion that Nero, for example, certainly understood political reality, while Seneca did not. But we have to try to understand Seneca's " psychological situation ": he was greatly disillusioned since Nero did not realize his ideas as he had hoped. There, the mechanism is borne out and that even before universities came into existence. Let us take another period. A man like Louis XV understood political reality exceptionally well; Madame de Pompadour probably better. How ridiculous does the incompetence of a few people who thought they knew the laws of nature appear in view of this. What good were the claims, the interference, of the " intellectual " Montesquieu or the " intellectual " Voltaire if politics had " technical necessities "? Szczepanski's scheme, in which Ivan the Terrible does not differ from President Carter, Brezhnev from Jefferson and Idi Amin from Marcus Aurelius, in which democracy does not differ from dictatorship, Byzantium from Paris, the Middle Ages from the twentieth century, tyranny from law and order, a clown from Solzhenitsyn, in short such an all-embracing but imprecise scheme does not allow for any criteria enabling one to judge whether some " behaviour " on the part of intellectuals is not perhaps sensible and useful. If such criteria were included, it would become evident

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that the value of individual "behaviour" varies. For example, such "behaviour" as writing *L'Esprit des Lois* is to this day of great benefit to world civilization. Kurbsky's disputes with Ivan the Terrible or Herzen's with Nicholas I or Alexander II did not change tsarist policies, but they at least changed something in Russia's culture. The disillusioned Beethoven's "behaviour" towards Napoleon, the removal of the *Eroica* dedication, which was merely a symbolic gesture, had at least precisely this symbolic value. Perhaps Professor Szczepanski might be prepared to understand such an act of expiation committed by the "intellectual" Beethoven, who doubtless felt ridiculous "in the eyes of his friends." But Napoleon understood political reality! Thus in Szczepanski's scheme Beethoven's "behaviour," as well as the "behaviour" of Seneca, Montesquieu, Kurbsky, Herzen and Jerzy Andrzejewski, would be a symptom of their ignorance of realities, in other words mistakes. They would admittedly deserve forbearance and would be psychologically intelligible, but they would be mistakes. We should likewise see Thomas Mann's behaviour towards Adolf Hitler as a mistake, since the politics of the Third Reich had "technical necessities." Furthermore, the "intellectual" Thomas Mann unwittingly allowed himself to be exploited "by various political groups," among them communists.

It is obvious that Szczepanski treats the "behaviour" of intellectuals as something peculiar that has to be explained by the specific mental traits of these people, by their heightened awareness, their complexes, etc., and never by such outside impulses as objective social or political situations. Such situations can only languish in the intellectual's psyche as the anachronistic echoes of past events and conditions, for example from times when a certain country was deprived of its sovereignty. The more recent reality is not relevant. Intellectuals do not apparently react to it at all, but exclusively follow impulses arising in their inner selves, where the subjective *daimonion*, belief, reigns and where various dreams, ambitions or individual worries whirl round together.

As a result of this approach, everything that intellectuals protest against loses its sense. There can be no public discussion about the repression of workers, but if it nevertheless occurs to the reader, it already seems to be rather the peculiar *idée fixe* of converts, the obsession of mentally warped individuals, and not a social fact. It is only they, those complex-ridden penitents, who are seeking an opportunity to repress the guilt that constantly torments them. Veiled by the penitents' guilt, the oppressor's guilt vanishes. In this situation, so conveniently confused for the oppressors, the intellectuals' defender can express his opinion and say: let the oppressors be calm, but let them understand these unfortunate neophytes, don't let them worry about their penitential shouting, let them see everything in its right proportions, for in fact nothing serious is happening; it's a question of hysteria.

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PROFESSOR Szczepanski's scheme is surely false as regards most of the people he collectively calls " intellectuals." Scores of scholars and people now in their 20s have not been affected by " belief " or " disillusionment " since they did not grow up during the age of ideology. (Professor Szczepanski will surely agree with me that this age has passed in Poland, leaving a shop-window imitation behind.) Thus a great many of the people " signing protest letters " cannot be included among those whose " belief was let down." So who can? I'll make it easier. I can.

Indeed, in the latter part of the war, when I was 18 years old, I was carried away and blinded by ideology. This is not the place to describe how and why it happened. But it did. And it should be clear that it is not a question of socialism, or even communism or Marxism, since these ideas or social programmes, until they turn into their own negation, are not at all more stupid, less honest or more utopian than others. Now, after so much practical experience, I do have doubts about their practicability, and I respect differing opinions. But I do not respect the blindness that consists of deluding oneself that a manifest contradiction of these programmes supposedly constitutes their realization; I do not respect such " belief " or such schizophrenic stubbornness, this being precisely my " belief " in my early youth. And it was several years before I came to my senses. Yes, that's how it was. I confess to this mental blackout; I experienced it and I could write much on the subject, including its moral aspects and consequences. But it is a separate subject which I cannot deal with properly in passing. However, that " belief " was my mistake. It was perhaps also the mistake of half a dozen or a dozen other people forming the subject of Szczepanski's study. So why should all intellectuals " signing protest letters " be burdened with responsibility for my mistake or the mistake of a few people like me (though every case is not entirely similar)?

Still, it is a pity Szczepanski did not try to give us at least a rough definition of " belief." I have already pointed out the ambiguity of this notion in the professor's article. First he identified " belief " with communist ideology, and then began to speak of attitudes, convictions and traits of human nature, which are not necessarily associated with communist or any other ideology. But once again he treated these attitudes, convictions and character traits as symptoms of " belief," giving the impression that he could still be dealing with " belief " in its first meaning.

It may seem odd but everything of importance achieved by mankind was at first the work of " injudicious " individuals. By this I do not mean that I believe in madness. I mean that we can work out rationally what awaits us only when we consider and take into account the apparent " impossibilities " which do in fact materialize. Of course it is not easy to foresee these, but wisdom usually lies in thinking with imagination. In saying this, am I not substituting one word for another

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and in fact displaying belief, merely calling it imagination? On the contrary. Belief—nihilistic, obtuse and hopeless—is the " certainty " that everything has been settled once and for all and that nothing can change one's fate. Events have already repeatedly shattered this kind of belief in Poland. Each time they have astounded the fatalists and thwarted the narrow-minded calculations of the opportunists.

In recent years, Poland and the world have seen the appearance of social, political, economic and cultural " realities " which more clearly than ever before indicate unexpected internal activity, agility and the transformation of various apparently hard and fast systems. Anyone who is at all acquainted with the facts will surely not deny this. The fundamental " truths " of antiquated opportunisms and beliefs have been manifestly shaken. In the light of " realities," for example, it is difficult to carry on believing in an omnipotent ruler. One could point out " realities " that would allow us to suppose that change in Poland is likely or simply inevitable. And one could point out " realities " that would entitle us to believe that we have within our grasp those changes that would bring us more freedom, more justice, less falsehood, less poverty, less derision and humiliation and more respect for man's needs and his rights and dignity. But such an analysis lies beyond the scope of this article.

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A Treatise on Ticks

Piotr Wierzbicki

Definition of the Tick

Ticks are something between the new masters of Poland and opposition activists, like the majority of the Polish nation, forced into at least passive participation in the socialist-Soviet Vistula spectacular. Is a tick therefore simply a grey citizen of Poland? Is a peasant a tick if he thinks that things were better in Bierut's time, or a worker if he commits himself to labour emulation, or a clerk sent out with a banner into the streets of Warsaw to welcome the beloved leader of the land of the Soviets? Is everyone a tick who bows down obsequiously to the new masters? No, if tickery were simply a synonym for submissiveness, there would be nothing to discuss. Submissiveness is a banal phenomenon, existing in all places and as old as the world. Tickery is something rather special. It is, one can say at once, a phenomenon characteristic not of society as a whole but only of the upper intellectual levels. We do not seek ticks among peasant-workers, booking clerks and charwomen. We seek them among rectors of colleges, journalists and artists. Would a rector be a tick then, if, on orders from someone in the government or Party, he found a place in his college for the son of some dignitary? Is a journalist, if, in fear of the censorship, he describes only half of what he sees, or an artist if, for pay, he paints a certain head with a pointed beard? No, these again are symptoms of pure submissiveness, not worth writing about. Tickery depends on something different. The tick serves his masters in a highly specific and refined manner. He serves them by the quiet work of his grey matter. A tick stands erect on his two hind legs and thinks. About what? About how to justify the idea that, that which is, must be. Justification is not the strongest point of the new masters. In the task of justification, the ticks fill in for them. When a rector finds a place for some dignitary's son at the behest of someone on high, this is simply an ordinary case of bowing one's head. When a professor writes a text indicating that from ages past intellectuals have been eager for power for reasons of ambition, and publishes this precisely when the security police are holding discussions with those intellectuals the situation is more refined. Here it is not the body but the spirit that stands up on its hind legs. Here the grey matter is put into service.

Are they then cynics, refined swindlers, out for profit? Really! A tick a cynic! If a tick were a cynic, then this sketch would have been finished long ago. If a tick had the ability to be a cynic, such a great tick ulcer would never have arisen to poison Polish culture. But the tick does not know how to be a cynic. A cynic is someone who has the courage to lie brazenly. Brazenly, but once only! A cynic does

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not do and say what he thinks, but he does think for himself. His words and deeds may be called deceitful, but the sphere of his thought is free from deceit. A cynic is in conflict with life. A tick is not. A tick, then, while labouring to find some justification for the various deeds of the new masters of Poland must also toil at talking himself into these deeds. The tick does violence to his own spirit.

Genealogy of the Tick

We shall leave to the historian the discovery of the forefathers of ticks in past ages. Being concerned with the present, we shall point out only their immediate ancestors. The tick directly traces his descent from the " positive non-Party " type who inhabited Poland in Bierut's day. The " positive non-Party " type was a citizen of People's Poland, concerned with the reconstruction of the country, supporting the general line of the Party, sympathetic to the Soviet Union, honest, active, disciplined but having in his ideological ballast small accretions of the "old," a dubious social origin, a certain intellectual way of expressing himself, a certain tendency to fall into aestheticism. Precisely as a result of this small accretion of foreign matter, the " positive non-Party " type did not belong to any militant organization. But he played a very active role in organizations of a general humanitarian character such as the Polish–Soviet Friendship Society, the League of Women, the Committee for the Defence of Peace, the Popular Front and the Polish Red Cross. The " positive non-Party " type was generally a middle-aged professor who looked with warm sympathy on the execution carried out on Polish learning by the Party, security police and communist youth, or a grey-haired writer of an aesthetic type who granted the Stalinist activists absolution from the uplands of Bach and Chopin, or a pre-war engineer who was an enthusiast for the rationalization movement. The " positive non-Party " type was a person well-known in his own environment. He was distinguished therefore, by a certain positive character; he diligently approached everyone personally when there was a meeting, and sometimes even sat on the presidium.

The positive non-Party type played rather a passive role in the class struggle then being waged in our country. He did not unmask enemies of the people; only rarely did he speak up sharply at meetings, he emphasized what was humanistic in the new system, rather than its revolutionary character. Obviously there was nothing remarkable in this. And yet it was necessary. The Stalin-Bierut-ite functionaries valued him and cherished him more than one of their own. Sometimes he even drove a " Demokratka." * Every union of creative artists, every academic discipline, every place of work had a very essential educational function; it showed that truly the best Poles

* " Demokratka "—a luxury Chevrolet car, bought during the first years of People's Poland for the *crème de la crème*.

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were members of the PUWP and employees of the security service, but that the non-Party citizen, if he so wished, could stand, perhaps not in the first but anyway in the second rank.

Types of Tick

Ticks live mostly in the capital of Poland or in some of the larger administrative centres. The biggest concentrations are in Warsaw and Cracow. Ticks congregate in the universities and in other types of institutes of higher learning, in the presidium, committees, departmental secretariats and institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences, in the scientific institutes of individual ministries, in unions of creative artists and the press, particularly in the editorial boards of literary-social weeklies or monthlies. Ticks appear among the young, the middle-aged, the old, among Aryans and among Jews, Catholics and atheists. Ticks—from a certain intellectual level upwards—appear everywhere, in every generation, in every social, racial and ideological group. The multitude of their varieties is thus impressive.

But let us consider, first of all, the artistic tick, principally of the literary kind. It seems that there are at least three varieties:

1. The grey-haired creative type, the humanist and aesthete.
Ticks of this variety are extremely well known and popular in society; they have received from the new masters of Poland the right to carry on in their old-fashioned, pre-war, European style. In return, all that is demanded of them is that every so often they should, with an understanding smile, do homage to the socialist-Soviet crudeness flooding into Poland. Their mouths are full of Bach, Chopin, Leonardo and Tolstoy; sometimes they sit on some presidium or other and utter beautiful speeches to suit the occasion.

2. The young creative type, the avant-gardist.
Ticks of this kind are particularly cunning. They know that under Bierut *avant-garde* creative artists were treated frostily by the *crème de la crème*. And they know quite well too that today, (under Gierek), the avant-gardist is treated warmly by the people's government, because, today, the threat for that government is not the form but the content. So let him jabber, screech, and use a donkey's tail as a paintbrush—just so long as he does not describe what is actually going on in Poland. They hope, however, that the public at large will not notice this turnabout in the government's attitude to the donkey's tail. And so, dressed up in the plumage of nonconformists, they soar on the fumes of pure form. The task assigned by their masters is exceptionally modest: not to see what is going on in Poland. And, to the best of their strength and ability, they do not see.

3. The midde-aged creative type, the petty realist.
The masters of Poland do allow these ticks to look at the country, but subject to a certain condition, that out of it comes a twisted,

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trifling, old-womanish " tut-tut." The petty realist, who in his mind has chopped Poland up into tiny pieces so that the censorship can swallow it, gains from the authorities the right to work, publish and even to criticize individual errors and shortcomings. In exchange, he supplies the reading public with proof that it is possible to write as he wishes, provided that it is done skilfully so as not to irritate the censor.

WE now have to analyse how the tick reveals himself in his political attitude, in his actions and towards his environment. And here again we are struck by the considerable diversity of ticks. We can distinguish—from the point of view of political attitude—at least four varieties of tick.

1. Party ticks. There must be some misunderstanding here. A red tick? Not at all. The Party, although continually criticized for its dogmatism and rigidity is nevertheless at bottom extremely elastic and tolerates in its ranks some extremely atypical citizens. If then it is possible to be a member of the Party while going to church and conforming to a fideist outlook (recognizing, of course, its inferiority to Marxism–Leninism), why should it be impossible to be a member of the Party and also a tick? And, in fact, there are quite a few ticks in the Party. In the coffee house or the literary salon, the Party tick is absolutely indistinguishable from the non-Party tick. If he practises the profession of writer or journalist, he becomes increasingly absorbed with cultivating the most enlightened and humanistic traditions of socialism and fighting the most hard-headed groups within the bosom of the Party. The Party tick rails against any Party hard-liner, and, out of his experience forged by polemics against idiocity, can without fear for his reputation publish every couple of years an article justifying the necessity for successive price rises and how absolutely essential they are for further increases in the standard of living. The Party tick functions daily as if certified. He can specialize in criticism and polemics, and is not obliged to write every day about love for the Soviet Union. Once in several years, however, he behaves like a completely normal person; he receives an assignment, he fulfils his obligations, he does his duty. Some Party ticks have long since become ripe for the change into non-Party ticks and remain in the Party organization only out of inertia and fear of the face which the *apparatchik* pulls when he sees returned to him for ever the tickish party card which is so valuable for the organization.

2. Ticks of the centre. These make up a definite majority of the tick population. The tick of the centre (non-Party, obviously), is a loyal citizen of the country; except for certain reservations regarding the conduct of current politics, he never comes into conflict with the government; he supports that government with learned works demon-

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strating the incompetence of the government of pre-war Poland and the growth of fascist trends at that time by articles on the denaturation of the consumer life-style in Western countries, reports of Nazi war criminals who have escaped punishment, and books on the positive changes which, in spite of errors, are taking place in our country. It is only rarely that the tick of the centre receives an assignment to defend the progressive system, only at difficult moments and in drastic situations. He does not play a fundamental role in political campaigns, he does not write manifestos, he does only as much as he has to, and so, for example, if he works for a newspaper he does not on his own initiative write an attack on the workers of Radom and Ursus. If, however, the Editor-in-Chief asks him to write an anonymous editorial on that subject, he does so, trying though to make the text as cultural as possible, and is very proud that, instead of the word "bandits" which someone proposed, he used only the milder designation of "hooligans" to refer to the demonstrators. The tick of the centre is sure that somewhere on the political map of the country is to be found a mean between the opposition and the government, and that the stance which he adopts is the most natural, normal and justified for an intelligent person under Polish conditions.

3. Nonconformist ticks. The nonconformist tick is encountered only rarely. He is a tick who has won for himself the status of a notorious and incorrigible fighter, battling against the nonsense which surrounds us on all sides. The nonconformist tick does not deliver laudatory speeches, he does not write propaganda, no one proposes to him that he should write some introductory article justifying something or other. He holds views which are honest, bold, and incorruptible. And these are his text. There is only one threshold that the nonconformist tick will not cross. He will not associate himself with any opposition activity. Provided that he does not sign protest letters or go to illegal meetings, he is allowed to act and functions as a public figure. In fact, not much is demanded of him. But if he wants to remain a nonconformist tick, he will have to work at it systematically, since few people are able to remain one. It is necessary to hold some trump card, for example, an unquestioned talent, or an especially influential job. Nonconformist ticks, who are honest, talented, critical of the reality about them and who do not come into conflict with the government are valuable to the latter, provided that they stay under control. From time to time a nonconformist tick actually does get out of control, signs a round-robin or a protest, and moves on into the category of enemies of the people.

4. Ticks who are victims of oppression. This would appear to be a contradiction in terms: a victim of oppression can surely not be a tick, a victim of oppression is surely an undaunted opposition activist, prepared to make the greatest sacrifices. And yet there do exist ticks who are victims of oppression. How? Because a progressive system

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wages war against the enemy within in a very specific manner. In reactionary social systems the state dealt with its enemies by striking at them alone. This constitutes a serious breach of the principles of dialectics, forbidding the separation of anything or anyone from their socio-economic base. Hence in the Soviet Union and later in People's Poland and the other socialist countries the method adopted was to deal with the enemy by striking not only at him but also at his children, great-grandmothers, aunts-in-law, neighbours, acquaintances and anyone else who might know him, when possible, and also at those who might not know him, but who independently are enemies, or at least potential ones. Ninety-nine point something or other per cent of the tens of millions of inhabitants of the Gulag Archipelago are people who never themselves raised a hand against the land of the Soviets. In People's Poland this phenomenon occurred on a scale that was incomparably smaller but sufficient, with the additional refinement that there were to be found in prison or simply on the pavement a few random individuals who not only were not enemies of the people (or who fought against the Germans in the Home Army), but, on the contrary, intended merely to honour that people or to offer it support with advice and a timely word, or even had already begun to support it, but of course it is impossible to check this. Thus we come to the position that certain actual or potential ticks did become victims of oppression. In 1956, the ticks came out of prison, were rehabilitated and began their great careers as ticks. They ran like the wind into collaboration with their masters. Forthwith, too, they began to lead the way in sycophancy, sycophantic intrigue and semi-deviationist pretence at opposition. Their busy goings on would have been suspect to anyone who drew a distinction between liberal-humanist slogans and the moral and political content of concrete actions. But their goings on were not suspect to everyone. For they had their past of suffering. They were victims of oppression. They had passed their practical examination with flying colours. No one reminded these martyrs why they had been persecuted. Human memory is short. He was in prison, therefore he is a hero.

In fact, there was not such a great number of ticks who went to prison by chance. But is prison necessary for a tick to parade in the plumage of a martyr? All he needs is a far milder form of persecution, such as dismissal from work, demotion, no promotion, censorship of a "sharp" article, suspension of the publication of a novel. A progressive system creates unlimited possibilities for this type of persecution. In a country where one's job, pension and possibilities of promotion are partially decided by one's moral-political stance (i.e. degree of submission to the authorities) there is no constant and rational criterion for evaluating performance, and it can be very easy to lose your position without having first made some mistake, without having first taken some risk, but by the purest chance, just

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because someone higher up has lost his job (likewise by chance). The tick who has been sacked assumes the plumage of a martyr and becomes sacrosanct. In a country in which the First Secretary of the Party is subject to censorship, in which everyone and everything is subject to censorship, if someone writes an article or story, he has to deal with the censorship, even if he only writes about Lenin, humanism and peace. Sooner or later he will make a mistake and, for example, use a name which has been anathema since yesterday, or, conversely, forget something which became obligatory from today. No one in Poland has yet puzzled out every intention of the censorship. The fact that the censorship stops something is evidence of absolutely nothing and, in particular, is not evidence that this was a "sharp" text. It is by no means impossible that, quite on the contrary, it was not that it was too "sharp," but, for example, too anti-American, just at a moment when the Polish People's Republic is seeking a new hand-out of dollars from the USA. Obviously the tick counts on the fact that the public does not know how the censorship works and wears his confiscation like a wound from a famous victory.

Mechanism of Formation of the Tick

A citizen of the Polish People's Republic, we may say, is not born a tick. At some period in his life, some process takes place in him or there appears in him some tickogenic element. There are various ways of turning into a tick. We have been able to identify and distinguish four.

1. Bad social origin. A progressive system is so perfect and so morally elevated that it constantly produces complexes in people. In Bierut's time, one such very typical complex was the social origin complex. The social origin of highest renown in People's Poland is obviously a working class origin. In second place comes a peasant origin, and here it is preferable to be the child of a poor peasant than a rich one (in Bierut's time, this was applied with greater consequence than today: the children of poor peasants were made much of, the children of middle peasants less so, while the brood of kulaks, owning farms of say, 15 hectares, could not even dream of getting a place in higher education). In third place comes intellectual origin (here in Bierut's time two possibilities were distinguished, the "working intelligentsia," a more positive group, and the "intelligentsia," a decidedly suspect group). In fourth place, came "private enterprise" origin, which was obviously fatal. And what then? A great big gap, and then came the worst thing under the sun: origin among the pre-war landowners, aristocrats and factory owners. If—speaking about Bierut's time—it was difficult to be the child of parents owning more than two cows, how was one to bear the burden of being the child of a banker, a squire, an aristocrat, in short, of an exploiter and enemy of the people who in collusion with foreign capital had

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pushed Poland towards the calamitous precipice of September 1939? For some people this was past endurance. They created for themselves, against the background of their inappropriate social origin, a guilt complex and made an all out effort somehow to wipe out their guilt and to beseech the favour of the people's government. A Party career was closed to them, but the career of a tick lay open. And they became ticks. A count for hire; a positive count is an important sociological element for present-day Poland. He is living proof of the humanitarian tolerance of the proletarian *avant-garde* which, rather than breaking his bones, cossets him, and also of the patriotic unity of all Poles, concentrated, in spite of the differences which divide them, around the Party and its leaders.

2. *The desire to be someone.* This is at once the most universal and most banal tickogenic mechanism. In a country where to become not only a director but even some subordinate boss or department head, it is desirable and usually obligatory to belong to the PUWP, the road to a career and a life of success lies open only to those who rule and those who toady to them. If one is not very gifted or indispensable as an engineer, mathematician, physicist, chemist, astronomer etc., then to carve out a career for oneself one must either join the Party or become a tick. Some jobs are simply closed to other citizens. For example, that of journalist. In a progressive system a journalist is not just an expert in transmitting and commenting on information; he is a "worker on the ideological front," a petty clerk with the task of carrying out propaganda instructions. A journalist in People's Poland has the responsibility of defending and praising the current team of the PUWP to the last hour it holds office, even if (as in December 1970) it sends out machine guns against the workers, and then to criticize it and thunder without mercy the instant that it has been ousted by another PUWP team. Only Party members and ticks are fit for this task.

3. *Total loyalty.* A celebrated Polish composer found himself one day (during the 1970s) among a group of his fellow musicians in the presence of one of the deputy ministers of culture and art. During the course of a discussion on the problems of music, someone drew the attention of the Deputy Minister to the fact that there were two gifted Polish composers living abroad, Andrzej Panufnik and Roman Palester, and that it was many years since their music had been performed on Polish platforms. The Deputy Minister replied: "I don't see any objections: if you want to play them, then play them!" At this the celebrated Polish composer burst out: "But, Mr Minister, haven't you seen the anti-Soviet implication on the sleeve of the Panufnik record?" (he meant the composition dedicated to the memory of the victims of Katyn). The Minister had not seen it, he was put out of countenance and said that since the musicians themselves had reservations concerning the matter, he did not want to

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have to deal with it. Thus the question of the blocking of Panufnik and Palester was deferred for a certain time. The question now arises: what did the celebrated composer achieve by making this denunciation of his émigré colleague? We would propose the hypothesis: loyalty. The celebrated composer, winner of a state prize, esteemed by ministers and deputy ministers, constantly able to travel abroad, simply does not know how to behave disloyally. If one Minister let him travel abroad, if a second pays him compliments, a third gives him a prize, if the Party accepts his slightly suspect aesthetics, how can he have the right to behave as a Judas? No, from the Deputy Minister who favoured him with his trust he could not hide anything. The Deputy Minister was quite ready to agree to Panufnik, because he obviously had not seen this anti-Soviet sleeve. If the celebrated composer did not have the duty of informing the Minister, then who did? Obviously he had a moral duty. The total loyalist wants to be in good standing with everyone. And since the thing which surrounds every citizen of the Polish People's Republic the most closely and tightly on all sides is the government, the loyalist, wanting to be in good standing with everyone, is loyal first and foremost to the government. There is not, in fact, too great a number of total loyalists in Poland.

4. *The truth lies somewhere in between.* There exists, as indeed is all too well known, a type of character and intellect trained to the formula " the truth lies somewhere in between." These are the compromisers, the people who never clearly commit themselves to any one side because they have a soft character and intellect. In any situation they have a simply infinite battery of arguments for and against. They are of the opinion that the government in Poland is bad, but there are certain positive features, that in Sweden the government is better, but . . ., that dependence on Russia is a very bad thing but, on the other hand, however. . . . Ticks of the " truth lies somewhere in between " type perhaps lack the essential quality of the tick: they do not have to do much work on themselves to become muddle-headed; they already are muddle-headed, they get their heads at birth already infected with compromise and halfway-itis. There are grounds for assuming that if the system changed, these " ticks by birth " would behave in the new anti-communist system just as they do today, namely, with reserve and hesitation, while all the other ticks would obviously immediately don the plumage of indefatigable anti-communists. Ticks from birth, less hypocritical than the rest, nevertheless fulfil the same tickish function and are, moreover, fairly numerous, especially in university circles.

Life of the Tick in Society

The tick is a citizen who is active professionally. Just active? Unusually active, committed, even a fighter. Against whom does the

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tick fight? Surely against the dictator Somoza, the revisionist Strauss, the hawk Brzezinski. Stop, don't show that we know nothing about ticks. They fight against symptoms of evil appearing not somewhere abroad but here in Poland. The tick, generally speaking, cannot come to terms with the fact that roses still do not grow everywhere around the prisons and jails. So the tick fights for flower beds and herbaceous borders. He dedicates his working life to this cause. He speaks out and writes articles and letters to the editor. Just pick up the annual index for any newspaper from 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976. There we can see numerous ticks in action. One devotes a series of articles to an incompetently restored apartment house in Gdansk, a second rages about the neglected grave of some poet, a third considers that it would be possible to build a funfair in Radom, a fourth states that he will not rest until they repaint the fence of the children's playground at Ursus, a fifth is of the opinion that sugar coupons could be ornamented with some pretty design. And so, according to the ticks, the unwearying improvement of our reality continues.

The Tick and his Companions

A tick normally associates with ticks. There are obviously exceptions to this rule. These relate to contacts both with Party members and members of the opposition. In the case of a Party member, the tick generally contents himself with a single representative of this variety, a single one but not a random match. Who is this person? He is the tick's immediate superior, his boss, chairman or professor. The contact which the tick maintains with the Party member, his superior (very cordial, marked by a somewhat intimate respect, but not too frequent), is usually concealed from the rest of his acquaintances. The tick fears that his superior, the Party members, might not take the fancy of some of his companions, that indeed this group of companions might think evil of him. What does it mean, evil? That he is a red. To a tick—this must be plainly understood—it matters considerably that those around him should not confuse him with the Party riff-raff. Some ticks are prepared to distance themselves from Party members to the extent that they maintain contacts with members of the opposition. Perhaps " members of the opposition " is too strong—such a tick generally has one member of the opposition in his circle of acquaintances. As a result he suffers agonies of fear (when they bundle off to gaol the member of the opposition who has the tick's telephone number in his diary), but still it makes him feel heroic, courageous and anti-state. The majority of ticks, however, keep clear of the opposition, and when one of their non-opposition acquaintances becomes a dissident they sever relations with him.

Ticks congregate in coffee houses, inciting people against the system, rooting for enemies of the people and intriguers. They read

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the opposition press (ah, what dissidents it makes them feel), but still, they will never sign any protest letters, never write an anti-state text, and never meddle in anything which might cost them their job. If at their place of work, for example, in an editorial office, some conflict of a political nature breaks out in the Union of Creative Artists, the tick tries to settle it. When there is a drive against Solzhenitsyn, Kolakowski or Sakharov, the tick is bold enough to point out that while it is possible, even necessary, to write polemics against them, this must be done in a skilful and cultured manner; that assaults which are too sharp and unwarranted have the reverse effect. When the Party members launch a political attack on some celebrated artist or other, the tick does not join the offensive, but expresses a sceptical or downright negative opinion on the purely artistic values of his work.

The Inner Life of the Tick

We now come to the most important part of our text. Now follows something much more fundamental than deliberations on the genesis, types and education of the tick; an attempt to present his system of thought, an attempt to describe the tick's intellectual structure. How could one dream of omitting this section? Leaving it out would be blatantly injurious to the ticks. For it is this system of thought, this intellectual structure which is precisely the achievement which the tick in the course of his quiet intellectual work on himself has arrived at painfully in the course of the 30 odd years of the existence of the Polish People's Republic, worked out by the joint efforts of the tick's grey matter, and their shield and defence. So let us have a proper look at it.

A. Arguments for not signing a protest letter

Ding-dong! A visitor he hasn't seen for ever so long, tea, chat, and more chat. The tick's acquaintance from opposition circles has come to see him. They wax indignant together over some new police round-up, massacre, or amendment to the constitution imbued with warm sentiment towards the USSR. The doors and windows are tightly shut, one can frolic at will. Suddenly the visitor goes to his coat pocket and takes out a sheet of typing. He gives it to the tick, who quickly skims through the closely typed text of the latest protest letter. The tick stops reading and begins to ask factual questions about the present range of actions. The visitor replies, the tick listens. But only on the surface. In reality, he is busy with another matter, figuring out how to explain that he cannot sign. At this point the reader will surely feel disgust. This figuring out is the thing ticks have been exerting their grey matter on for the last 30 years of quiet conceptual work, and now their representative is unexpectedly driven to the wall, he has to wait and think out arguments against signing. Patience, good reader, have a little more trust in the ticks. For, of

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course, they have these arguments figured out, on call and ready drilled for all occasions. But it is one thing to know theoretically how to behave when someone gives you a paper to sign, and another to find oneself face to face with a paper and a member of the opposition. The tick must decide, according to the circumstances and the person of his interlocutor, what line of argument to use. This is the repertoire at his disposal.

(*a*) *Duty to the family.* The tick cannot sign a protest letter because the tick is a person with duties and responsibilities. It is not oneself, of course; the tick cannot allow that certain definite consequences of signing should affect his family. It is rather a matter of wife, husband, aunt and grandmother. Most of all, the children. It would be easy to get the impression that no one in the world has ever loved or will love their children like this Polish-People's-Republic tick. The thought that his children might have to eat brawn instead of frankfurters, or apples instead of bananas, that they might be expelled from the crèche, not admitted to kindergarten, won't get exemplary conduct badges in school is unbearable to him. Protest letters are all right for bachelors and unmarried women, and also for basically irresponsible people. His hands are tied. One day, when the child has his school leaving certificate, his MA and his Doctorate, then maybe, maybe . . . providing of course that no grandchildren have appeared. For the good of his grandson, the tick will have to restrain himself even more. But in heaven, he will protest for sure, with all his might.

(*b*) *Love of his job.* The tick cannot join in the protest because his professional work plays a simply enormous role in his life. Without his editorial board, his theatre, his film crew, his union of creative writers, without the responsibility of publishing his books, life would be simply unimaginable. Singing a protest would mean dismissal from work, a ban on publication, annihilation of his career. The tick can't do this to himself. Of course, he would sign at once if he were in as strong a position as N. N. cannot be touched. If N. signs, no one will do anything to him. In general, it is people like N. who should sign, those who cannot be touched. Here the tick calls to mind the million-fold ranks of pensioners. That's who should be the army of the opposition. What can they do to pensioners? They won't cut off their pensions. Why does no one go to the pensioners with protest letters? And the chronically ill—the tick begins to dream—the incurables, the cancer patients, those to whom the Polish People's Republic can do nothing more, why do they not sign? Go and seek your signatories in the hospitals, and don't expose people who are already exposed to repression. Go to the hospitals and old people's homes.

(*c*) *The wrong moment.* The tick has been thinking about taking part in some protest action, but just now it is quite the wrong moment.

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Why did no one come to him with a protest letter last September. September was the time to protest, and to protest sharply, not now. The action is simply too late. Too late, and in another sense, too early. This is too important a question to be played about with in an incompetent matter. Think about what you're doing! I'm warning you!

B. Provocation

And are these three arguments all one has to protect oneself from the intriguer who wants a signature to a letter? Ah, have more trust in the ticks, more faith in their wisdom, more esteem for their achievements. These three arguments are only as it were the first and most distant line of defence. They are the methods which the tick, forced to the wall, most probably uses as a first reaction. But in addition there exists a whole battery of intellectual achievements ready for more complicated scenarios, capable of being deployed in a situation which has been analysed somewhat more profoundly. And in addition to these reserve arguments there is the whole interior make-up of the tick, his whole intellectual world, from which you can grab whole handfuls of arguments. Surely, isn't it true in a certain sense, that everything which the tick has at the centre, has been amassed, as a result of quiet conceptual work, to serve as a reason for refusing to sign a protest? Let us try to reveal something new about this inner make-up.

The tick possesses an irresistible, powerful and all-embracing tendency to see provocation in everything that goes on around him. Provocation, of course, by the Party or the security police. The mouse lashes its tail against the cat. The naive person thinks that this is an anti-cat action. The tick knows better: it is not an anti-cat action but a cat action. The cat had a hand in it, inspired it, and lets the mouse come closer, to get its hands on the evidence. Evidence of what? That the mouse doesn't like it. The students have taken to the streets—provocation. The workers of Radom and Ursus protested against the decision to raise prices—provocation. The setting up of KOR—provocation. Setting up the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights—obviously provocation. How does the tick know that these are all provocations? Why, because if the security police did not have a hand in it, no one would have taken to the streets, no one would have protested against anything, no one would have been able to found anything. The very success of the action is evidence of its provocative character. The security police doesn't let anything happen without its approval. If a certain grade of tick were to wake up and find Poland swept clean of Party organizations, Soviet troops, police, security forces, the Polish–Soviet Friendship Society, and the Volunteer Auxiliary Police and Poland ruled by the London government-in-exile, he would certainly go on maintaining for a long time that this was a new provocation by the

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government of the Polish People's Republic, and would refuse to acknowledge that there was no longer any need to sign anything.

For what purpose—according to the tick—does the government of the Polish People's Republic burn down regional Party headquarters, get students and workers on to the streets and induce naive intellectuals to organize protest actions? Obviously to trap those opponents of the regime who have not yet been trapped and to have an excuse for turning the screw still further.

The tick has seen the authorities' deceit, and does not let himself be manoeuvred and will not let himself become involved in suspicious goings on.

C. Liberals and hardheads

The tick is an expert in a certain field of knowledge, to which one would have thought he would not have access. Namely, he has a perfect knowledge of the faction fights within the PUWP. In knowledge on this subject the tick surpasses not only the rank-and-file members of the Party but also a great many members of the Central Committee, and maybe even of certain secretaries, not to speak of members of the secretariat. The tick knows the Party set-up, and nobody knows it better than him, or maybe only the CIA. This knowledge includes the view that members of the Politburo and their deputies, secretaries and members of the secretariat, heads of Party sections and first secretaries of regional committees can be divided into two categories of activists: liberals and hardheads or hardliners. The liberals try all they can (unfortunately, it is not much) to make the economic policy more rational, to have greater freedom prevailing in matters of culture, and to see that the police and security authorities dealing with dissidents use as gentle methods as possible. The hardheads or hardliners strive (and unfortunately they succeed) to tighten the belt of the economy, to turn the screw on culture and to use the sharpest means possible in the struggle against the opposition. To this intra-party front must be added—in the opinion of the ticks—another conflict which divides the whole government apparatus: the conflict between the Party as a whole and the security apparatus. The security apparatus—in the opinion of the ticks—is an independent force, which implements its own policies. Some hardheads within the Party possess certain contacts with security. However, the Party as a whole, its First Secretary included, has only a limited influence on the doings of security. The police in Radom tortured the workers—Gierek knew nothing about it. The security hounds the members of KOR, gifted intellectuals and artists—Minister of Culture Tejchma, who is a member of the Politburo*, knows nothing about it. The Party liberals in general know very little and can do even less. But why can they do so little? And here we come to perhaps

*Tejchma was dismissed from the Politburo at the Eighth Party Congress in February 1980.

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the greatest achievement of the ticks' grey matter, because the opposition has weakened their position.

What this liberal Tejchma builds up, what steps he takes to loosen the screw on culture, is immediately undone by some letter from writers about the fate of Poles in the USSR or on the amendments to the Constitution. For the hardliners say at once: "You want to loosen the screw a bit, Comrade, you feel sure that they'll be good now, but what does this letter say?" and Minister Tejchma cannot find an answer, the protest letter has knocked the arguments out of his hands.

The programme of action which results from the ticks' diagnosis: the sensible citizen must act in such a way as to enhance the power of the liberal wing of the Party. What weakens that wing? Letters, protests, strikes, demonstrations and uncensored books. What strengthens it? The absence of letters, strikes, demonstrations and uncensored books. You want liberalization—avoid all ill-considered actions, don't protest, don't make demands, don't take to the streets, don't take part in producing provocative literature—only censor it carefully at home yourself. Be present at the Meeting of the Union of Polish Writers. After the meeting, somewhere upstairs, there will obviously be a dogged battle between the liberal minister Tejchma and the hardline secretary Lukasiewicz. The meeting elects an executive committee from writers guided by the Party, the opposition doesn't get to vote. "Victory for Tejchma," the ticks say with relief in their voice. In a literary weekly there appears—surely by chance—a cartoon against anti-semitism and so anti-state. The editorial ticks express their profound sorrow: "something terrible has happened, we have given a pretext to the hardheads; now they will grab our journal, now we shall have to take great care that these idiots (the bosses) don't let something through again." You want liberalization, you don't want the hotheads to carry the vote, then be on your guard, take action against irresponsible behaviour, censor your own work and other people's (for it could happen, by chance, that something could get past the censorship, and then the hardheads will notice it). You want liberalization, then fight against freedom. Why? Because otherwise the hardliners will come and grab you by the throat.

D. Someone worse will come.

Let us for a moment take a closer look at the soul of a tick in a middle or high position in the social hierarchy, for example, the head of a section of a socio-literary weekly, or the director of a scientific institute. Isn't he full up to the nostrils with these ultraloyal leading articles, this scolding from under-educated *apparatchiks* from the Central Committee? He's fed up to the back teeth and even higher; ten times over he's been ripe to chuck the job and do anything else. But if he's a true tick, then he'll never actually do it. Why? Because if he

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leaves, someone worse will come in his place. And that our tick can't allow. Someone will come, and will call the workers of Radom, not just hooligans, as before, but bandits, someone will come and will attack idealistic scholars not for idealism but for subjectivism, someone will come and throw out the book, standing ready in type, which the censor did not pass, crudely and with insults, instead of sending it back after half a year of delay and smiling conversations. Everyone must—in the opinion of the ticks—stick to his job, bear the heavy burden of responsibility, even humiliation, for the sake of higher reasons. Such as? The good of Polish culture, obviously. The good of Polish culture is the supreme value. One must be able to sacrifice one's personal interests for it. The ticks make this sacrifice. They serve, they offer incense to the censor, they kick out, even make denunciations—all for the good of Polish culture.

E. The world through the eyes of a tick

How does the contemporary world appear through the eyes of a tick? It is obviously a world divided into two blocs, American and Soviet. Poland is dependent on the Soviet Union, which is obviously a totalitarian state. Indeed, today there are not more than two or three completely independent states in the world. The struggle for the complete independence of Poland is an unreal one. The West is obviously better than the Soviet Union, but it too has various deeds on its conscience. Radio Free Europe sometimes gives interesting news but it is generally biased. The BBC is better. Nationalism, national fervour is a bad thing; the best stance is that shown by mildly leftish intellectual centres in the West: humanism, progress, common human values. Liberalization is a good thing. The struggle for the complete independence of Poland smells of must and obscurantism.

F. The ticks' authorities

Ticks consider themselves to be morally pure individuals, untainted by any dirty or, God forbid, nasty business. They are humanists and moralists. Against the brutal reality of the Polish People's Republic and Party, they wear a coat of moral principles and higher culture. What plays the fundamental role in tick morality and culture? Obviously, the examples of actual people. For a tick to feel good and to be himself, he needs a compass in the person of some coryphaeus, some individual of renown and moral purity, acknowledged for his higher culture. This is usually a professor, cosseted and promoted by the Polish People's Republic, but for some period subjected to mild repression, prosecuted, or in any case put out of his job, but afterwards gloriously restored to favour. Such a Professor, armed with the reputation of indomitable courage, afterwards delivers an innumerable number of fine speeches, sits on innumerable presidiums, is spoken of as a great scholar and is quoted in the press by every second journalist. And a great tick or quasi-tick like this is chosen by the ordinary

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tick as his compass. Above the tumult of opposition blusterers, he rises like a great statue, imparting spirit, support, and warmth.

G. The tick wants to be loved

Being related spiritually and socially to the liberal opposition, but a comrade after the flesh to the Party masters of the Polish People's Republic, the tick tries to be on good terms with everyone and wants to be loved by everyone. In an opposition milieu, he strives to pass as truly committed to opposition activity, morally pure, indomitably brave, nonconformist. In institutions of the Polish People's Republic, he wants to appear truly apolitical, dutiful, devoted to his work, loyal. From the members of the opposition he looks for acceptance, from the Polish People's Republic, prizes, promotions, awards and orders. And usually, it must be recognized, he is successful. The opposition is exceptionally forebearing, the People's Government is extraordinarily generous. When one side ceases to accept the tick, he raises hell. Some ticks are temporarily betrayed by their People's Republic masters. They are martyrs under the clause which we have discussed in a previous section; they fall into disgrace by the laws of chance, without any previous lapse into opposition activity; they are then swiftly restored to the bosom of the Polish People's Republic in the fraudulent plumage of indomitable victims of repression. Ticks who really try to put on the skin of the opposition can be counted on the fingers of one hand. A compromised tick, caught out in servility, usually falls into a great panic. He mobilizes his acquaintances, who have influence with the opposition, he runs around town offering profuse explanations. His advocates quickly come forward, showing that a righteous man has been wronged, that he is in a very specific situation, that he cannot be put on the same plane as patent conformists, that he has suffered so much. . . . A tick caught *in flagrante* snatches at the most fantastic means of defence. These depend principally on the attribution of hidden anti-state intentions to visibly pro-government deeds and actions. For example, a journalist who specializes in praising the world revolution, caught between two fires and driven to the wall, will try to show that under the guise of criticism of presidents and kings, he is really criticizing the leaders of totalitarian states such as the Soviet Union and the Polish People's Republic.

Who has the Right to Write about Ticks?

In concluding this sketch, let us ask ourselves, formally, but not just formally, the question: who should write about ticks, who has the right to do so? The answer seems simple—the non-ticks should write about ticks. But this answer is simple only on the surface; who can

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say of himself with a clear conscience that he is not a tick? Who, indeed? It is the tragedy of the Polish intelligentsia, Polish culture and simply of Poland, and the reason that this text has been written, that all or almost all of us are, in whole or in part, or have been to a certain degree, ticks.

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Ticks and Angels

Adam Michnik

WIERZBICKI says: "We shall leave to the historians the task of discovering the forefathers of ticks in past ages." Since I feel that I have connexions with the profession of historian, I shall allow myself to make a few remarks by way of a supplement.

The genealogy of the "tick" phenomenon must be sought in political situations where foreign domination of the Polish people assumed a chronic character and any hope of armed defence for our national values was totally illusory, when compromise with the conqueror had become inevitable to preserve the very existence of the nation. The problem of the permissible limits of compromise was then a daily challenge to the minds and consciences of people who, in a conquered country, wanted to live and act. Total acceptance of the formula of compromise was the road to becoming morally compromised and to spiritual capitulation; total rejection of the formula of compromise was the road to a more or less heroic isolation. During the years of the partition of Poland, attitudes of compromise and situations of difficult choice were our daily bread.

There were violent disagreements and fundamental differences between the supporters and opponents of accommodation, between the legalists and the conspirators, between those who advocated special betterment and the insurrectionists. The supporters of radical action in the heat of their polemics always glossed over the differences between betrayal of the nation, accommodation, and work for social improvement, but tended to reduce all these different patterns of behaviour to a common denominator: a desire for personal gain. Only when time had rubbed off the corners and levelled out the contours did it become possible to evaluate the effectiveness of different forms of resistance to the fate of foreign domination and to see the complementary nature of these opposites.

To put it clearly: there were different ways of fighting for the Polish cause and these were effective in different ways. It was not only those who took part in armed uprisings who fought for the existence of the nation. Sometimes accommodation was effective, sometimes legal opposition, and sometimes society was simply forced to strive for social betterment. If there was some sense (and I myself think there was, though even today it is open to doubt) in resorting to insurrection tactics in the time of Kosciusko, the [Pilsudski] Legions or the [1830] "November Night," it quite clearly made political nonsense to plot insurrections in the puppet-kingdom of Poland under the governorship of [the Russian General] Paskevich.

I want to recall that time, now far in the past, because it makes it easier, I think, to master our emotions and to think things over calmly.

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We may note, therefore, that an active member of the opposition views reality in one way and an intellectual writing a commentary in another, while a moralist, trying to dispense justice to the "visible world" will view things in yet a third way. Each of these views has its own lights and shades. The perspective of the member of the opposition is inevitably forced to be one-sided. This helps him to reshape the world, but makes it difficult for him to perceive the many dimensions involved. Moralism lets one perceive the snares which lie in wait for everyone who assumes an active responsibility, but fosters the aesthetic cult of "clean hands." The stance of the spectator makes it easier to understand the complexity of the human condition but makes it no easier to answer the question "what is to be done?" nor the question "what is good and what is evil?"

One looks upon the world one way if one wants to change it, another if one wants to understand it, and yet another if one wants to pass moral judgment upon it. I am convinced that I will not change this state of affairs by my article. Anyway, that is not my ambition. I simply want to try to convince my opponent that if he totally commits himself to thinking on moralistic or current-opposition terms (which comes to the same thing), then he will lose a certain essential part of reality from his field of vision.

It is important to remember these shamefully banal observations when taking up the question of the attitude of the Polish intelligentsia under the governments of the former regime. The picture drawn by Wierzbicki is clear and unambiguous. At that time, Poland was under the rule of Stalinist-Bierutist functionaries and Party Young Communist troops carried out the execution of Polish learning. And that's all. Somewhere the whole dramatic quality of social and political reality has been lost; lost too somewhere the whole impassioned picture of the mingling of disaster and hope, understanding and naivety, fear and gallant courage, the dynamism of society and the behind-the-scenes actions of the Soviet advisers. It is as if in answer to the Stalinist primer on which we were reared at the time we had been given a primer *à rebours* where the colours were equally compressed and glaring and the picture of the world equally infantile.

The reality of the early post-war years was—in my opinion—incomparably more complicated than would appear from the ultrasimplistic formula of the "reds" and their intellectual lackeys, the "ticks."

This period is among the most painful in our history and among the most hypocritical. It may even be that it is because it is so painful that it is hypocritical. Putting aside the general discussion, which cannot but be painful, to another occasion, we shall make only a few fragmentary remarks.

AT that time, the country was drained of blood and the fortune of war determined by the Yalta Conference. The form of post-war reality had been determined not by the blood which had been shed

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and the heroism of the anti-Nazi resistance but by the international balance of power. The Western allies abandoned Poland. What way forward was left to our society?

Many a time I have dwelt on this problem. So many times have I striven to find, in the not too far distant history, the point at which an error or false choice in Polish policy sealed the unhappy fate of the Polish nation. And I could not find one. Following through the history of the Polish cause during and after the war, I have the feeling that Clio, the muse of history, has turned her back on the Poles, so as not to give them even the shadow of a chance to break the bonds of misfortune and to find a way out of national oppression. Every direction of Polish policy was a losing one.

Time went by, the Stalinist noose was drawn even tighter around the neck of a nation oppressed and drained of blood. Everyone was faced with the question: where is the limit of permissible compromise? What price can be paid for the chance of lecturing, publishing, pursuing one's profession? For in a totalitarian system it is always necessary to pay an admission fee, and this has become ever more exorbitant. The conditions laid down are always accompanied by more or less veiled threats and blackmail.

I do not remember such times, I know them only from various reports and documents. Today, years later, it is difficult to evaluate the actual choices which were made at that time. It is even more difficult to find a measure, out of the context of that time. He who knows of such a measure is simply to be envied. If Nadezhda Mandelshtam is right when she asserts that silence in the face of totalitarian domination is a "true crime against the human race," then almost everyone is guilty of that crime. Even the noblest have been forced into passivity and silence. Only those in the prisons and labour camps are free from this. "Blessed prisons," wrote Solzhenitsyn, "only there can a man achieve freedom from participation in this accursed machine of lies."

Aleksander Wat wrote somewhere that there is only one answer to the question of how intellectuals should behave in the lands where Stalin ruled. It is the Shakespearean answer: "They must die."

Perhaps this is the true answer. But still, I consider, this answer can be made only for oneself, this measure meted out only to oneself, this sacrifice demanded only from oneself. Anyone who demands this answer from another is arbitrarily arrogating to himself the right of determining the life of another. And this, in general, leads to nothing good.

In spite of what we read in the "Treatise on Ticks" no rectors or editors who were outwardly obedient but "pro-Western" and "counter-revolutionary" in the depths of their soul had an easy life, by any means, in Stalin's time. Fingers were constantly pointed at them. They were constantly suspected of the "taint of bourgeois consciousness." Over-zealous agitators saw in them camouflaged

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defenders of the past. To such juvenile agitators the world appeared grossly simple. The capitalist system—the cradle of fascism—was enemy number one of human happiness. Anyone who decided to make even the least compromise with the dying culture of the capitalist West was, for them, the principal adversary.

The simplicity of this view of the world, the ease of passing judgments, the highly intolerant political fanaticism of these years dictated to a young writer, even if he already had recognized productions to his credit, lampoon-formulae such as "for bourgeois writers the fight against German fascism became an escape from political decision, or even worse, became a cover-up for imperialist ideology! (. . .) It is necessary to reassess actions which in the years of nationalist deviation were termed 'anti-fascist' and 'righteous,' thinking that this would suffice for ever."

This was the form taken by the lampoon of Tadeusz Borowski on "ticks." Stefan Kisielewski reacted to this piece of political journalism with a letter which is worth quoting here. "I consider, Sir," wrote Kisiel to Borowski, "that you are a journalist of great talent and equally great ignorance. You formed your opinion of the world in occupied Warsaw, in the hell of Auschwitz and in debauched occupied Germany. This is devilishly little. You remind me of the Malayan girl in Conrad's short story. This girl read only a local newspaper which just reprinted the court cases from European papers and came to the conclusion that Europe was simply one great underworld dive . . . Finally, I doubt that you will be able to keep your footing on the inclined intellectual plane down which you are rushing. But I want to keep my conscience clear. I have warned you."

I do not want—that would be demagogy—to assert that Wierzbicki is repeating against the same people the same objections which were once formulated by the most fanatical adherents of the Stalinist line. I am able to distinguish the text which serves the powerful of this world from the text which is an ardent protest against conformism and the distortion of reality. It is not my intention to make a superficial exposé of Tadeusz Borowski who paid for his own Stalinist choice of ideology firstly with the ruin of his talent and then with a suicide's death. I want only to convince possible admirers of the "Treatise on Ticks" that refusing to see the complexity of the world of human duty and actions and adopting a lampoon-type purity of outline may lead to over-simple decisions and harmful verdicts. I do not know if I shall convince them, but I can repeat after Kisiel: I have warned you.

PLEASE believe me. I really do understand Wierzbicki's anger and his opposition to the process which Milosz, some years ago, called "moral decay" and "Pétainism." I understand too, however, the bitterness of people who, through all this, often clenching their teeth and enduring humiliations, created a morsel of our own mental

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reality, preserved and restored old values, and built up new ones, and now, today, are called " ticks."

It is senseless to demand careful and balanced appraisals from a lampoonist. The very technique of the lampoonist's art makes an opinion more radical. I do not make the claim that Wierzbicki, by employing the definition " tick " is sharpening the outlines of reality, but that his anti-tick passion makes it impossible for him to understand them.

For—although this does not emerge from Wierzbicki's text—the reality of our country differs considerably from the reality of those countries which are our neighbours. We are less receptive to the process of Sovietization. Why?

There are various factors which make us different; historical tradition, the Catholic Church, and the brave though so very realistic line taken by the Episcopate, the countryside which has defended itself in the face of collectivization; finally, unremitting social pressure. This has manifested itself sometimes in violent explosions (Poznan 1956, March 1968, December 1970, Radom 1976), but generally in quiet, daily, dogged resistance. A resistance which is, as it were, incompatible with denunciation. The mental atmosphere of a part of the intellectual environment, lectures and seminars in institutions of higher learning, the carrying out of doctoral research and the publication of learned communications, novels, slim volumes of poetry, essays, meetings of the Union of Writers or the P.E.N. Club, films and theatrical presentations, museums, concerts and vernissages. And this comes largely from the work of people who sign no protests and perform no spectacular deeds of opposition. Yet it is equally due to them that we now breathe a different air in Poland. A spiritual air. And this daily creation of an invisible but fundamental strand in the culture and consciousness of the nation is not simply the result of reading *Zapis* or the *Biuletyn Informacyjny* or the publications of the Independent Publishing House. It is a result of the totality of Polish achievements.

This totality is becoming an object of envy to visitors who are citizens of other nations of the " camp." They do not envy us just for KOR, SAC and uncensored publications, but also for journals which are published officially. And not only for *Tygodnik Powszechny* or *Wiez* but also for *Tworczosc, Pamietnik Literacki* and even for *Polityka.* They envy us our full churches and our fully operational catechetical centres, the theatrical productions of Diemek and the films of Wajda, the appearance of our streets and our attractively dressed girls. Thanks then to all this we are preserving our identity and a capacity to keep up a resistance to the Sovietization process.

I SHOULD be the last to claim that our situation is satisfactory and that our aspirations have been pacified. I am constantly writing on this theme in the uncensored press. Sometimes, however, one must look at our situation, at our ills and misfortunes, not only from the

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viewpoint of aspirations and misfortunes, but also from the viewpoint of threats. Among those threats I include the picture of the fate of a nation which we see in our eastern neighbours, the Lithuanians, Belorussians and Ukrainians. They have to fight for their existence at the elementary level: it is a struggle for language, religion, the treasury of national culture. Let us evaluate these differences. Let us evaluate how different is the fate of nations under a communist system. It is also worth considering circumstances which are taken for granted concerning the most essential differences between the Russian and Polish defenders of human rights. In short: although the political police make life difficult for us, we feel that we are strong, since we have the support—moral and material—of broad sections of our society. We have the support of people who are not by temperament either politicians or heroes, who do not want to have to give up their comparatively stabilized family life, who certainly rarely decide to sign a protest letter, and who—I must say—actually take for granted the success of the campaign in defence of the workers of Radom and Ursus. Without the support of such people, independent publishing work would be hard to imagine.

I have a different outlook from Wierzbicki concerning the "people between the government and opposition." When a learned professor of sociology reacts to the protests of intellectuals against torture in Radom by writing a refined theoretical study in which the protest of these individuals is depreciated, then my anger resembles that of the author of the "Treatise on Ticks," and it is with satisfaction that I read the keen riposte of Jacek Bochenski to these lucubrations. But when a professor, instead of making a comparative psychoanalysis of the protesting individuals decides to use his parliamentary immunity and go to Radom for one of the trials, to see for himself how the functionaries were meting out justice, if then, without in the least involving himself in the cases that were being fought, he makes a report to the government about what he has seen there—why does Wierzbicki call his action "tickish"? I do not consider it so. I would rather rejoice that in the bosom of the governing elite rational attitudes are beginning to take shape, that the ruling strata are beginning to define correctly their own proper interest, that I can recognize in the circle of my opponents at least a shadow of political culture. So far there have not been many such symptoms. I think however that if we abandon hope of such an evolution, then the alternative scenario must include a sequence of violent confrontations between the authorities and society. Any one of these confrontations can give rise to a national tragedy. It is our common duty to avoid such situations, since it could turn out that the whole nation and every Pole, not excluding the government, would pay an inordinately high price for their lack of responsibility in this matter.

This conclusion does not mean simply that anyone should be persuaded to take part in intra-Party intrigues. On this point I share

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Wierzbicki's scepticism. It is important, however, to remember that we live in a society where hundreds of thousands of active people belong to the communist party. Membership is the price which has to be paid for taking part in public life, for the chance of a job at management level, and so forth. Maybe Wierzbicki considers (and I myself am of that opinion) that the price is too high, that it is a price not worth paying and is unseemly. Nevertheless, we live and we shall continue to live among people who think otherwise. We must learn how to coexist with them and to teach them to coexist with us. We must learn the difficult art of compromise without which true pluralism is impossible. Furthermore, we must observe in the face of the authorities the standards of political culture, even when the authorities do not preserve these standards. Only then shall we manage to set dignity against totalitarian brutishness.

I am not an aesthete, and I do not suppose that everybody, one and all, could live in a state of uninterrupted friendship. I do, however, believe in the creative power of our actions. I believe that it is possible to increase or decrease the amount of hatred and intolerance in our public life. I believe finally, that the shape of an independent and democratic Poland is even now being hammered out. I should wish to see it based on tolerance and political culture, but I know that it will require long years of work to make these values universal. Hence it is necessary to make them universal even today, and not in verbal declarations but in daily action.

That is why I am so afraid of a certain type of reaction to Wierzbicki's essay. For the "Treatise on Ticks" is an extremely evocative text in its passion for unmasking the essential diseases of Polish intellectual and civil life. It is a continuation of the great tradition of Polish lampoons on society. Wierzbicki does not flatter the reader; he accuses and overturns. Such a stance in an author earns respect.

Nevertheless, the "Treatise" will not be a bucket of cold water on the intelligentsia, but a nice simple reader confined to cheering the hearts of the dissidents, unless it is supplemented by a "Treatise on Angels." For among us, angels are doomed to criticism, which they are bound to scorn, especially if it comes from the pen of Gontarz or Klodzinska. But an angel who is not criticized, an angel confirmed in his angelicness can turn into a devil. Don't you believe it? Read that book about the most noble and valiant people in Russia, a book which I have hated for years, yet to which I return again and again, like an addict to cocaine, a book which is a curved mirror in which every angel sees his disgustingly distorted face, a book which is antipathetic and penetrating to the point of cruelty. Read *The Devils* by Dostoevsky.

I know that whenever a tick wants to justify his "tickery," he takes down from the shelf this very book, nicely bound in morocco, and reads out to his interlocutor choicer and choicer extracts. I know, too, however, that if the experience of the "devils" is not thought over

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and internalized by the Polish democratic opposition, then that opposition will be menaced not so much by secret policemen with scarred faces and dead eyes, but by Stavrogins and Verkhovenskys *à la polonaise*.

For a movement which does not perceive what is an unacceptable value in society is not sufficiently mature to reform it.

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Poland and Europe

PPN Statement

1. The word "Europe" has a clear-cut meaning only in the accepted geographical sense. Its other meanings depend on what we want to distinguish it from. Such is the case if we take "Europe" to be a distinct type of culture, civilization or political entity. Trying, however, to define the European character by comparing Europe with other lands has its drawbacks and leads to misunderstanding and argument. The point is not, for instance, to find a formula distinguishing "Europe" from the East or from Russia, for Russia as well has in its traditions undoubted European elements. One should seek definitions pinpointing what is characteristic and essential for Europe, what has been and is radiating from it, and then the European character will be only a question of degree. It will no longer seem paradoxical to include in a "Europe" so defined countries from other continents, but closely linked with ours, such as the USA or Israel.

What is Europe today from the cultural point of view? In its spiritual aspects it means a definite scale of values. These values, rooted in the Graeco-Roman and Christian tradition, have been complemented over at least two centuries by a tradition, best expressed in successive revolutions, of a struggle for human rights. At the top of the scale are the immanent values of truth, justice and human dignity. They are immanent even if taken wholly outside a religious context because they are more lasting, more universal and more immutable than those springing from the purely subjective viewpoint and when taking account only of the physical interests of an individual or a group. Next comes the freedom of the individual to pursue these ideals of truth, justice and human dignity; a freedom restricted only by the minimal legal norms necessary for the protection of society.

In the socio-political field these spiritual values are reflected in a liberal society and a parliamentary democracy. Irrespective of the extent and merit of objection of various kinds a broadly conceived liberalism (which is not restricted only to the liberal component in the history of our political and economic thought) is undoubtedly the only social and institutional system enabling the free pursuit of these spiritual values and providing at the same time a practical guarantee of the maximum freedom of the individual. This idea of liberalism is also undoubtedly the product of Europe, constituting the essential feature of the present European societies. It is the commonly shared expression of the fact that Europe is the cradle of what we describe today as "human rights."

2. There is in Poland a whole body of widespread, though not always well defined, views concerning Poland's membership of Europe. It is expressed in such slogans as: the Rampart, the Eastern Bastion, the Latin as opposed to the Byzantine tradition, etc. Opinions expressing

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the " Western " and " European " character of Poland refer primarily to the roots of Polish culture and civilization and to the fact that Christianity and, later, most of the components of our culture came from what is today called Western Europe and not from the Eastern and Byzantine source. To a lesser degree this " European " character of Poland can be seen by a sober comparison of the broadly defined Polish culture (in its social, political and spiritual aspects) with the essential ingredients of what we deem to be " European " culture.

Does Poland really belong to a Europe, so defined? From the point of view of the political system, no. Of tradition, yes; of social relations, only partially; of the aspirations of the majority, to a much greater extent; of its institutions (apart from the Church and some associations of creative artists), very little; of the thought processes of its scholars, artists, writers and clergy, very much so.

3. The " West European " orientation neither was nor is always considered right and desirable. From time to time, for various reasons, opinions have been voiced proclaiming Polish separateness or cultural self-sufficiency, advocating insularity instead of imitation of foreign trends—even rejection of Western or European Polish tradition. These often resulted from the fear of an indiscriminate, automatic acceptance of Western models and ideals; sometimes from resentment at the indifference of Europe to our subjugation and suffering; seldom though from the hope that the inclusion of Poland in the Byzantine-Russian-Eastern circuit would provide real power.

It is worth pointing out, however, that the calls for " separateness," insularity, " the Polish way," were usually tinged by a more-or-less wished or declared anti-democratic tendency. Of course the liberal vision of society is only one of many existing in the Western world, but it is only within its framework that the above mentioned values can be implemented.

Without discarding the European orientation one might hold the view that it is not a characteristic imprinted once and for all on Polish culture or that it will be in some way automatically continued but, on the contrary, that it has to be constantly fought for, which can only be done by the qualitative improvements of individuals and of society and not by borrowing and superficially imitating foreign models. This view is applicable not only to culture but, above all, to politics. The right of our nation to freedom and independence, so often stressed by Polish writers, is undoubtedly part of the European tradition. This does not mean that Europe should feel itself bound to fight for our independence. We have to win it ourselves and we must also realize that it is we who must want to be Europeans rather than Europe who has to want us to be so.

Undoubtedly Christianity and particularly Catholicism is at the core of Polish links with Europe. But neither the Church nor the Catholic faith automatically ensures those links nor, due to the nature of

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religion, do they cover the whole of their range. All we can say, therefore, is that an anti-Christian Poland certainly could not be European, but it is not enough for Poland to be Catholic to be automatically European as well.

4. Europe is the cradle not only of human rights but also of the rights of nations and of respect for their independence and integrity. It is also the birthplace of international understanding and cooperation and, first and foremost, of federalism. The unification of Western Europe is proceeding gradually, with difficulty, but is becoming increasingly evident. Poland takes no part in it primarily because it has been stripped of its full independence. It is worth recalling that during the Second World War, Prime Minister General Sikorski was an active supporter of the federalist idea while, after the war, most of the exiled political leaders, representing various groups, took part in pro-European activities.

Is the existing Europe interested in our possible future membership? One must clearly state that in recent years this interest seems to have been minimal. In the early post-war years, when European unity was but a hope and an idea, its supporters considered it obvious that the Central and East European countries could not be excluded. At the Hague Conference in May 1948, which called for the setting up of the Council of Europe, many exiled leaders of countries already under Russian domination participated. In 1950 the Council of Europe formed a special commission for countries not represented, under the chairmanship of Harold Macmillan. This was primarily concerned with countries under communist rule. In 1952 an international conference dealing with Eastern Europe was organized by the European Movement.

As and when, however, the idea of the community took institutional shape and common economic and defence policies began to emerge the countries left outside gradually faded from the preoccupation of political leaders. Moreover, from its inception the European movement was suffering from a kind of schizophrenia. Two tendencies and two types of reasoning, sometimes more or less connected and sometimes completely separate, coexisted inside it. The first harked back to the community of European spiritual values, to the greatness of European traditions and its still leading position in the spiritual and cultural field; the second was concerned with the community of current economic and defence interests.

When the first was in the ascendant the Polish question could surface and, indeed, it sometimes did. When it was the turn of the second, the Polish and, generally the question of all countries unable to speak freely on matters of their foreign policy, faded away.

This is understandable. The European character of Poland might appear of little consequence for politicians painfully constructing the economic community and of doubtful interest to generals preoccu-

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pied with the increasing strength of the Warsaw Pact forces. It is understandable but wrong. The attitude of the population of each country is a factor in the international balance of power. In 1939–40 France was militarily strong but the French were not convinced there was something to fight for. It greatly influenced the course of the war. In 1968 it appeared that communist propaganda, playing on fears of Germany and supposed West German penetration of Czechoslovakia so bamboozled the majority of Poles that the country accepted without protest the shameful participation of Polish forces in the Russian-led invasion of Czechoslovakia, in stark contrast to national traditions. If Gomulka had realized that this would meet with condemnation (similar to the condemnation of the 1956 Soviet invasion of Hungary), it is likely he would have refused Polish participation and this would have had far reaching political consequences. The attitude of the population of Eastern Europe will not be an inconsequential matter when, after the death of Tito, the fate of Yugoslavia will hang in the balance. It will no longer be possible to frighten people with Germany—the talk will have to be about NATO and the EEC. Hence on simple political and military grounds Western leaders should take an active interest in ensuring that the population of Central and Eastern Europe should have free access to unbiased information and a greater freedom to decide their own fate. Nothing will better help the cause of peace than making it difficult for autocratic governments to manipulate their subjects.

5. Would the Polish economy benefit from close links or inclusion in the EEC? In the long term undoubtedly yes, because the economy of the Community, in spite of current difficulties, is basically healthy and efficient. This is proven by its constant expansion, its positive balance of trade and the vast credits granted to Poland. The argument "either partnership with the USSR or partnership with the West" is completely false. If our economy was of a free market kind—and therefore necessarily more efficient—we would have been a much more attractive trade partner for the Soviet Union.

It is clear that the switch-over of our economy to free competition with the producers of the EEC would require an enormous organizational effort and a change in the very attitude to work. We have, however, a potentially good, although presently under-utilized, supply of managers, engineers and skilled workers. There is no reason why Polish industry and agriculture, which was competitive before the war, or during the three-year plan, once management structures are changed and it rids itself of party chieftains and ignoramuses, could not become competitive with the industry and commerce of other countries.

6. We might say in a general way that in so far as the European Community is swayed by short-term economic and political considerations, Poland remains of marginal interest. For at the present moment its

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partner is the Government of the Polish People's Republic whose "European" sympathies are indeed doubtful, though often emphasized for propaganda reasons.

Recently, however, particularly in connexion with the elections to the European Parliament and with the pronouncements of Pope John Paul II, the pro-European arguments, referring to the spiritual traditions, have come to the fore. These arguments cropped up in the pronouncements of the Polish Bishops, particularly during their visit to West Germany. This "spiritual" appeal of the pro-European orientation has a significance reaching beyond that of the pronouncements of Church leaders or outstanding intellectuals. The recent decisions of the EEC concerning the admission of Greece, later of Spain and Portugal and also of Turkey are not only motivated by economic advantages but express what, in fact, Europe should be.

For the first time in history governments responsible to freely elected parliaments exercise power in the majority of European countries. Only in the central and eastern part of the continent do we have democracies in appearance only. The Kremlin rulers would like to perpetuate this state of affairs and vaunt to the world the benefits of stability. But this stability is like numbness, similar to that brought about in 1815 by the Congress of Vienna. Stability at that time also served the domination of conquered nations. Today there is only one remaining imperial power. It will not last forever and equating the present international order in Europe with peace is but a slogan to frighten us with.

7. Not everybody considers it evident that for Poland cooperation and, later, participation in a united Europe are desirable, either spiritually, economically or socially. There are several types of argument against it. For instance, there is reluctance to find oneself cast in the role of the "poor relations," an unfavourable view of the economic complementarity of Poland and the Community; the belief that our potential markets are in the East; the belief that Europe is undergoing such a deep social, economic and spiritual crisis that it is not worthwhile to join a decaying body; indifference resulting from the present lack of practical opportunities of linking up with the West; the belief that the links forged within the Eastern bloc are so strong and lasting that they will decisively determine the future development of Poland. Finally, let us mention the most frequent and superficial argument of those who consider that though the broad European colouring is important it need not be related with the totality of culture, civilization and politics.

It might seem that although the latter is not worth discussing it nevertheless provides the background to the present cultural and economic policy. But those who are ready to imitate Italian cars, Parisian fashion, Western gaming arcades, British television serials, etc., should ponder the fact that all these fashions and inventions

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are influencing our daily lives. Our amusements, our self-service shops, all the jeans and pizzas, camping sites and discothèques, household goods and pocket calculators come, in fact, from Western Europe. Whether the popularity of these innovations is due to a subconscious longing for a freer life, or from their inherent utility, the fact is that, even separated from Europe by politics, frontiers and censorship, we receive from it both the life juices and the froth.

It is indeed the present condition of our country, immersed in a nearly continuous economic crisis, in debt for enormous sums to the EEC countries, which turns us into poor relations. In spite of an enormous effort from the whole nation in rebuilding and modernizing our economy, the gap between the Community and ourselves is not diminishing but increasing. We try to reduce it by extensive borrowings and large investments, both of which create permanent distortions of the whole economy but these efforts are proving ineffectual. Our products are being sold to the industrial countries at prices and on conditions typical for the exports of backward countries, selling cheaply goods which on international markets are generally considered as second class. Our trade with the Eastern bloc is much easier, but it is a trade with other relatively backward countries, seldom involving goods of international standards, whose manufacture improves and modernizes supplier industries.

Being snooty about the crisis and decay of Europe smacks either of an unthinking acceptance of propaganda or of pretentious dislike of the unattainable or, at best, shows ignorance of the fact that an ideal economic system does not exist. Parliamentary democracies and free market economies have their illnesses. They are more apparent because there one can talk and write about them freely. Is the continuous malfunctioning of the economy, the lack of responsible government, the domination of the party apparatus, the licence to destroy environments and waste human resources, the diminishing conscientiousness at work, the alcoholism and falsehood in the whole of public life better than such symptoms as unemployment (whose victims, let us note, receive relatively more than, for instance, our young doctors do). Then there is the commercialism of culture and governmental instability resulting from the rivalry of political parties. Our answer is that we prefer the ills which can be freely identified and cured by joint effort to the ills which permanently afflict society, reducing it to a dull and amorphous mass.

Nations and societies have the right freely to choose their future. Poland can, therefore, choose its path independently of Europe coming together. However, taking all arguments into account we might consider what a non-European future for Poland could be. Full spiritual, cultural and economic independence is in the present world either impossible or has to be paid for by turning back the clock of history, as Albania has done. Poland—as always since the eighteenth

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century—can be either European or Russian—*Tertium Non Datur.* Pondering the matter we must first of all remember that such is our alternative. Of course this applies to paths of development. Although we find ourselves in Moscow's sphere, to some extent we can preserve our European character, but we can lose it if we do not struggle for it.

The situation prevailing during the partition of Poland, when the lands under the Tsars were falling behind the lands under Prussia and Austria from the point of view of civilization, education and, particularly, politics, repeats itself. A non-European Poland would completely lose the sense of law as a code of conduct regulating human relations, of an understanding of self-government, of respect for human dignity; respect for private property protected by a law independent of the rulers and of public property subject to open administration and public control. A non-European Poland would increasingly loosen its links with its own traditions, enriched through the centuries by the interaction of antique and Christian ideals and influences flowing from Italy, France or Germany mixed with native creativity and political institutions.

8. The multi-national Polish Republic has contributed, particularly in the domain of parliamentary institutions, tolerance, individual freedom and respect for human dignity, to European culture. Poland has not only received from Europe ideas, institutions and inventions but has also contributed in return. It has also always conveyed European values to its neighbours, particularly in the East. It still performs this function in the field of culture and political aspirations. Members of the European Community should always remember that Poland plays this role, whilst the Poles should remember that being a bridge, an intermediary and propagator is part and parcel of the Polish historical tradition which for that reason is an indispensable component of European culture.

Our efforts to preserve national identity and historical tradition, and our links with European countries are of great importance for other Soviet-dominated countries as well—particularly for Czechoslovakia and Hungary. These countries are also linked with Western Europe through their past and the contents of their culture. One of the stark proofs of the artificial character of the political system imposed on our part of the world by Soviet communism is the fact that our relations with these countries, natural partners to a regional federation, are today so loose and so completely bureaucratic.

9. What can we do today to bring Poland closer to the integrating Europe? So long as we are unable to recover an independent national existence, so long our efforts will be limited to the domain of ideas, cultural creativity, to education and information. It might be that this limitation is not wholly bad. It might be that such a preparation of minds is indispensable, so long, that is, as we make proper use of the time available.

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The present state of our knowledge of Europe is poor indeed. This applies to both the state of present-day Europe and of the unification processes. To dispel this ignorance and to help the work of education and information the assistance of the European Movement and its institutions is necessary and indeed quite feasible—scientific, educational, publishing assistance as well as scholarships.

Publications about the principles, history, aims and functioning of the Community are needed. The sponsorship by the European Parliament of a book in Polish giving the basic information and providing the basic documents could be of great help. Broadcasts in Polish on the subject of European unity by West European stations would be of value. One might expect that as the integration of the Community proceeds a European broadcasting station will be created. It would be welcomed if it could also broadcast for a few hours a week in Polish.

Preparing Poland for Europe should also include knowledge of European, that is liberal-democratic, political principles. The Europeanization of the Polish mentality would also entail preparation for life in conditions of political freedom—hence, for instance, the indispensable study of the merits and faults of multi-party systems, of the extent and role of planning in a free market economy, of the ideas and rules governing modern diplomacy, etc.

Europe can help in two ways: by promoting and sponsoring financially the preparation of publications which, in our conditions, cannot appear and by granting scholarships to scientists, writers and journalists. Associations of intellectuals and creative artists can show a greater degree of initiative in helping their colleagues who struggle against professional and political handicaps and who resist official indoctrination and maintain the tradition of independent European thought. Associations of lawyers could include in their programmes both an active interest in the observance of the law in communist countries as well as helping in restoring an awareness of law in these countries through publications, information and scholarships. Student associations could help non-governmental exchanges, providing assistance to visiting students from Poland. The same applies to trade unions which, because of their influence, resources and organization, could play a much greater part in promoting mutual understanding and information, for instance, by encouraging individual invitations, educational work and long-term exchanges.

The provision of European Community passports, rather than so-called stateless passports, to East European citizens who have acquired residence rights in Community countries would be of immense symbolic value.

One might nourish the hope that in the future development of the Community the influence of ideas, values and tradition will increase and that as a result the question of the eventual participation of Poland will attract more attention. One might also hope that within

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these domains the European movement will be ready to assist pro-European tendencies among Poles.

The Polish League for Independence
November 1979

Those millions of eastern- or middle-Europeans (in Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Bulgaria, the GDR and Yugoslavia) who have been under the authority of Russia since the Second World War are not prominent in the Western world and people do not like to discuss them too much. Is this perhaps a hidden guilt complex? These little-known and unpopular nations with chronically complicated histories, unjustly treated (although in the West, the wrongs done to them are long forgotten) by the Vienna Congress, reborn after the First World War when three empires fell and the "Unholy Alliance" toppled into ruins, later given as booty to Hitler because of the unreasonableness of Western politics—these countries today, after Yalta, act as hostages to the peace between the super-powers. And yet without them, Europe would not be Europe.

Stefan Kisielewski

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On National and Religious Affiliations

An Anonymous Polish Writer

ANY discussion about the concept of the nation falls somewhere between two opposite poles: the statement that the nation is an outgrowth of the capitalist market and the statement that the nation is the result of Divine Providence and as such contains an element of the Divine Secret, incomprehensible and ineffable.

A discussion which takes either of these statements as a starting point is unsatisfactory for different reasons. The first is clearly false, facile and at variance with an elementary knowledge of history. The second makes discussion impossible as it is rather tricky to talk about something which cannot be expressed. But for those who support this second point of view (and here I would include the following contributors to *From Under the Rubble*: Borisov, Solzhenitsyn and Shafarevich), I should like to suggest another way of approaching the question, which will, I trust, be compatible with their religious outlook, or at least not contrary to it.

Let us assume—and this assumption is by no means original—that the groups in which people live can be divided into those which are perceived to be "natural" and those which are perceived to be the outcome of a direct or indirect choice. We could call these groups "primary" and "secondary," or, with the reservation that the terms are not invested with the same meaning as that in which Cooley and Toennies use them, *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*.

Primary groups are, as a rule, comparatively small: the family, the village, the tribe or, with substantial reservations, the peer group. It could be said, half jokingly, that, both with *Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft*, space is in reverse proportion to time, i.e. in the primary group, history is perceived by its members as extremely long but the space it occupies is comparatively small. The opposite holds true for the secondary group—its history as a rule is short.

In Europe there are two important groups which do not fit into this preliminary sketch: the religious and the national. These are exceptions in that temporal-spatial relations are perceived differently by members of a given religious or national group. They see their history as long but at the same time the space occupied is so great that personal contact between all members of the group is out of the question.

So far the reader may well think that I have said nothing contrary to the views of the authors of *From Under the Rubble*, although the language I use would be inimicable to them. But, terminology apart,

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what I have said could be interpreted as follows: religion (not as a system of beliefs, but as an association of people) and nation are similar, related and parallel phenomena. This is not quite how I see it. In my opinion, religion and nation are similar and related phenomena, but not parallel.

They are similar in that belonging to one and the other satisfies the need, felt by most people, to transcend the *hic et nunc* of each individual; similar in that belonging to one and the other is not perceived as a functional affiliation but as deeply emotional and is associated with the values we hold most dear.

When I say that they are related phenomena I am thinking of instances where the idea of nation is intimately connected with the idea of religion. In European culture, we know of only one precise example of this, but it has played an important role not only for other religions but also for the idea of the nation. I refer to the Jews and the idea of a Chosen People. Europeans have borrowed from this as they saw fit: the close tie between nation and religion, the idea of mission, national Messianism, the Maccabean idea of national-religious wars of liberation. Despite these influences the link between religion and *ethnos* has never been so strong in what we call European culture as for the Jews. (I should like, as a non-believer, to mention here that Borisov's article "National Revival and National Personality" [*Natsionalnoe vozrozhdenie i natsiya-lichnost*] leaves the reader with the impression that the author identifies the Russian nation with the Orthodox Church, which is, from both points of view, unjustifiable.)

HAVING said a few words on the similarities between religion (as an association of people) and nation, I should say something about differences, concentrating on three perhaps not immediately obvious ones.

First, a nation has no *sacrum*. The consequences of this are self-evident and I should only like to comment that when people start to think of the nation as transcendental, in the same way as a god, the results are disastrous.

Secondly, on a symbolic plane in Judaeo-Christian culture religion is connected with the sky, whereas the nation is a chthonic "deity." The nation is connected with the earth and the fact that most national ideologies in Christianity consider the material substance of the nation is to be explained not by statistics but by symbolism.

Thirdly, the concept of "truth" (one of the most vital in our culture) is connected with religion but not with the nation. A religious man will make the distinction between the true religion and all others, which either contain no truth or else a partially distorted truth. One religion for him is the source of truth, and not merely of strength, love or rules of behaviour. But surely not even for the most fervent patriot

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or entrenched chauvinist is his nation, or the idea of nation as such, the source of truth. Nations cannot be divided into true and false.

But where does that leave all the populist (in the widest sense) doctrines and beliefs, where the people represent the only source of truth? There are three elements to be considered here. First, the deification of the people is, for the most part, a chthonic deification of the peasantry. Secondly, an identification is made between people and nation. Thirdly, in all doctrines of this kind, the concept of the " truth " of the people is invested with a special meaning, is, in all probability " ineffable " or at least cannot be described as an *adequatio rei et intellectu.* These three elements contained in the kind of statement " the nation is the source of truth " strike me as dubious, to say the least.

WHEN I say that religion and nation are not parallel phenomena I am thinking of the fact that it is difficult to establish any parallel between the history of a nation and the history of a religion. In the last two hundred years in Europe the development of what we could call modern national awareness has frequently been contemporaneous with (so as not to put it more strongly and say linked with) a weakening of religious ties. In other words, modern national awareness is, for the most part, an aggregate of worldly, not religious, emotions, thoughts and deeds.

This antithesis between religion and nation cannot be stated as a " law," however, as during the same period in Europe there were cases of extremely strong ties between religion and national revival or opposition. Here we could mention Ireland, the Prussian and Russian parts of Poland, Bulgaria (in the nineteenth century) and many national movements in the socialist countries, both in the Soviet Union and in its European semi-colonies.

These ties are not uniform as they are determined by the history of the given nation and the distinctive features of the given religion. Their heterogeneity can be observed in the contemporary examples of Poland, Lithuania, the Graeco-Catholic Ukrainians, the Soviet Jews and the religious wing of the Russian dissidents. They do have, though, at least two traits in common. The strong link between nation and religion is apparent where the oppressor is either of a different faith or a militant atheist. Secondly, the reasons for this strong tie are, at least in part, external both to the religion and to the nation. It should also be added here that the relationship is not equally weighted. People say for instance, " I am a Catholic because I am a Pole," but nobody says, " I am a Pole because I am a Catholic." Thus, national affiliation is not a function of religious belief.

It could be claimed that—by virtue of his faith—a believer has a different attitude to his tie with the nation from that of a non-believer. This is very probably so, at least in respect of certain of its aspects.

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For instance, a believer will observe certain customs because for him they have religious and national significance, whereas for a non-believer these same customs have only a national significance. But it is impossible to claim that the commitment to the nation of one or the other is "*better*" or "*stronger.*"

As I have touched on the social aspects of religious and national affiliations, I should like to mention one difference. Religious commitment, at least in part, is expressed even in everyday life through conscious acts of a religious nature: a believer prays, goes to church, actively observes a given number of religious prescriptions. Even in a country where there is no religious persecution, it is impossible to be an unconscious believer, whereas most present-day Italians or Dutch people express their national affiliation without for a second thinking that they behave in this way and in no other because they are Italian or Dutch. In other words, national affiliation, except in a situation of conflict (under socialism, however, national conflict is the normal situation), is expressed unconsciously, whereas religious affiliation demands conscious actions.

Does this contradict Renan's famous saying that the existence of a nation is the result of a daily plebiscite? I do not think so. I understand the metaphor in the following way: a certain proportion of our daily actions (good or bad, wise or stupid) bears a national stamp. When we accomplish these actions we are "voting" for the existence of the nation. We are "voting" because theoretically each of us could refuse to accomplish these actions. Theoretically, the voluntary existence of a nation is possible only when we allow the possibility of a voluntary rejection of its existence. Ethically, this element of choice is one of the prerequisites of free will, essential for what is called a Judaeo-Christian ethic and which today—in Europe—is the common property of the majority of believers and non-believers alike.

I have already said that there is no "law" governing the connexion between the development of modern national awareness and the weakening of religious ties. I should add that the relationship between religious and national social ties can be formulated in three ways: opposition, cooperation, indifference, but this is insufficient for the concept of a "law" to have any sense.

Does this bear any relation to the idea of Borisov's *natsiya-lichnost*, "nation as personality"? I trust so. When we speak of a "national personality" we mean a very specific type of social relationship. These relationships are very complex and not all are "rational." This is why they are more often than not seen to be ineffable. But this is not true. They can be described in various languages: some but not all in the language of philosophy, some in the language of sociology and some in the language of psychology. Can the modern nation be described in the language of religion? Personally I think not, but I am not a theologian and I may be mistaken.

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Mission

I have read quite a number of texts which say that a given nation has a mission. More accurately, I have read a lot of texts on the various missions of the Americans, the British, the Jews, the Germans, the Poles, the Russians and the French. For the most part, these missions, i.e. the goals discussed by the authors of these texts, strike me either as speculative or as not particularly noble or sometimes as simply criminal. Frankly, my attitude to the concept of a mission is one of distrust, especially when a nation has a mission in relation to myself.

Everyone has (or should have) the right to express his opinion concerning the tasks and goals he would like his nation to represent. In some cases this is not only a right but a duty. Some of these tasks and goals must be utopian, as a society without utopian ideals, without dreams, is a sick society. But in the main these tasks and goals can be formulated in straightforward terms.

The prime tasks and aims of a nation are in relation to itself. These can be both flexible and immutable. To live on good terms with other nations, neighbouring nations in particular, comes under the second category. This is an important task, and interesting in that it proves that society needs a mixture of utopian and realistic postulates. To live in peace (and in friendship) with all one's neighbours at all times is a utopian postulate, but also absolutely essential. History shows that conflicts frequently arise between neighbours and there is no reason to suppose that in future this will be otherwise. Nevertheless without this ethical norm policy is reduced to seeking petty "gains," and to planning bloody "final" solutions which do no more than breed future conflict. Utopian aims are unrealistic in the sense that they will never be fully achieved, but a potent force as regulators of behaviour.

If we agree that each nation has its aims and tasks, why object to the concept of "mission"? Is this not merely a question of style? I think not. The idea of a "national mission" is used

> (1) when what is being said, more or less openly, is that a given mission has been entrusted to the nation by History or God (tasks and aims can be formulated by us, they are open to discussion and criticism, whereas a mission is bestowed on us by an external body and is indisputable);
> (2) when it is a question of our relations with other nations (when a given nation defends its territory this is a goal, when it "goes on the march" this is a mission, either "cultural" or "religious" or "liberating" but always "historical").

This is why I prefer to speak of, to argue about, fulfilling tasks or achieving goals, and why I am mistrustful of missions.

In conclusion, a comment on a practical point. In his article "Separation or Reconciliation?" Igor Shafarevich writes:

> We are now able to perceive and tell the world things that nobody

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> else can tell: this is where I see the historic mission of the peoples that inhabit what was once Russia [I would have said the Russian Empire. Anon.] and is now the Soviet Union. They can point the way out of the labyrinth in which mankind is now lost.

The peoples who inhabit the Soviet Union have had in some ways similar experiences, but in others very different ones. And not only do they operate with different facts, but may have a completely different approach to the same fact. The example of Gogol is very revealing. Shafarevich mentions him with great emotion, taking—unconsciously no doubt—a purely Russian point of view. But one could exclaim with the same emotion: how would Ukrainian culture and the Ukrainian national consciousness have developed, if Gogol had become its leading light in the first half of the nineteenth century!

From this wide range of experiences, the authors of *From Under the Rubble* speak only in the name of the Russian experience, which is, of course, perfectly understandable. But I do not think that the Russians can show the world the way out of the labyrinth. If they knew the way out they would not themselves be so completely lost. The Russians can tell the world why it is not a good idea to go into the labyrinth and point out which paths lead to it. This is a very serious and noble task, or, to please Shafarevich, mission.

A Nation's Responsibility for its History

There are two questions to which I should like to try to find an answer. What sort of concrete action would express a nation's responsibility for its past? To whom, in fact, is a nation responsible?

I shall start with the second question as it would seem more straightforward. A nation can answer for its past to itself, to other nations, to God. This seems to me to be the correct order, for unless a nation recognizes its guilt, it cannot answer for it to anyone else, even God. And if a nation admits guilt it thereby recognizes its responsibility. Then, both the believer and the non-believer will likewise admit responsibility to other nations, whereas only the believer will recognize responsibility before God.

How can a nation realize that in the past a crime has been committed? In our century—through historians, writers, artists, priests, philosophers, i.e. through the intellectuals, or through those who spread the ideas of the intellectuals, inevitably trivialising these ideas. This is done (if it is done) by the school, the press, television etc. Personally I do not believe that intellectuals are the best possible initiators of a collective conscience. On the contrary, they form a very doubtful source, as they include an exceptionally high number of fools and knaves. (If an intellectual is not very intelligent, if he preaches immoral rubbish and possesses a flair for advertisement—Sartre is the best example—he is plain dangerous.) But we are dealing not with wishes, but with practice. And in practice this highly doubtful milieu

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includes such people as Thomas Mann, Czeslaw Milosz, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Alexander Zinoviev, whose influence on the national conscience is invaluable.

It could be argued that there is no such thing as a collective conscience. I agree entirely. A "collective conscience" as an entity is rubbish and from a religious point of view, I believe, heretical. People think, feel, act, influence one another. The collective conscience is what we call the moral judgments and related feelings which are accepted by at least part of a given group, even a group as large as a nation. Acceptance is perhaps not strong enough, they must be keenly felt. For instance, most Poles would agree that anarchy has destroyed Poland. This is partially true, but it is a dead truth. Poland is also being killed by the communists, who call all resistance to their barbaric and stupid government anarchy. This is stupid and laughable but it does correspond to the process of Sovietization, which, by the way, is based on the destruction of language.

When Solzhenitsyn speaks of repentance, I attach exceptional importance to his call and understand him as follows.

Every nation needs people who will say: our forefathers did such and such evil deeds, they injured their compatriots or other peoples. We must be aware of this, we must not forget it, we must feel shame on their behalf. This last point is very important. In order to appreciate the full moral, i.e. social import of this shame, the best thing is to recall how the communists tackle the problem.

First, they have, of course, a different concept of good and evil. The French communists to this day talk with pride of the Terror. But even where there would seem to be agreement this is misleading. For they say: yes, in the history of a given country evil deeds occurred, but the ruling classes were responsible and we have nothing to do with them; and therefore it is not our responsibility and moreover we hate the ruling classes. This mixture of hatred and innocence is one of the most destructive traits of communism as it appeals to a dangerous aspect of human nature, to a need to be justified at all costs and to an aggressive instinct. To say that a nation should feel responsibility for its history is an appeal to feelings of duty, affection and love (only those you love can cause shame).

But it is impossible, I will be told, for a nation to live with a permanent sense of guilt. Even if it were possible it would be undesirable.

To clarify my approach to this question I should like to take the example of the Germans. If we agree that a nation should feel responsibility for its past then the Germans have something to answer for. For at least 12 of the 15 years of its existence, the Nazi regime was supported by the majority of the adult population. So, are we to demand that all Germans do nothing but express repentance to all and sundry for the crimes committed by their fathers and grandfathers? This would be impossible, unbearable and if I may say so, tasteless.

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By demanding moral responsibility from the Germans we are asking them to be aware of their past, not to forget it, teach their children about it, talk to them of responsibility; and maybe, not everything needs to be mentioned all the time. I am not sure on this last point as I believe in the freedom of speech and of convictions; it is a delicate point which the Germans themselves should resolve.

This does not seem much to ask but a close look at the history of Europe tells us how hard it is. And how rare. And we are talking about only one side of the problem. The letter from Polish bishops to German bishops of 1965 is, in this respect an invaluable document, as it talks of mutual forgiveness, thus showing that the question of responsibility between nations (even between the Poles and the Germans) is a two-sided question. Responsibility has no meaning if it is always " they " and never " we " who are responsible.

I have already said that for a nation, i.e. the living people who form the nation, or at least half of them, to live with a constant sense of guilt, or as I believe Solzhenitsyn would say, in a constant state of repentance, is impossible and undesirable. Then why talk of responsibility, why approve of Solzhenitsyn's call to repentance?

A nation or any group of people is very loathe to admit a mistake or an evil deed. Individuals are not inclined to admit guilt, and this feeling is reinforced by other members of a given group. With a nation this group influence is especially strong. So, with rare exceptions, there seems to be no danger that a nation will suffer from too much guilt feeling. It is much more likely to suffer from the opposite—the hidden ulcer of unexpressed guilt.

Polish-Russian Postscript

Not to discuss this tricky subject would be an evasion, although there are at least three reasons against doing so. First, I have, with one exception, avoided concrete examples, as in the space of one short article it is inadvisable to try to deal with too many complex questions. Secondly, Polish-Russian relations are a topic more suitable for a whole book than just part of one article. And thirdly, I have no mandate to say " we Poles think such and such." The most I can do is to speak on my own behalf and hope that I am right.

So, Poles and Russians are historical, not geographical, neighbours. Geographically we share the same neighbours: Lithuanians, Belorussians and Ukrainians. This is extremely significant in the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and for the future of this part of Europe.

If I am right, it then follows that Polish-Ukrainian or Russian-Ukrainian sins should not be confused with Polish-Russian sins when we talk of responsibility. The tsarist decree of 1876, for instance, forbidding the publication of books in Ukrainian is a Ukrainian-Russian not Polish-Russian question. Similarly, whether Pilsudski was right to

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make a treaty with Petlyura or not is a Ukrainian-Polish and not Russian-Polish question.

It does not follow that Russians should not express an opinion about Polish-Ukrainian relations or that Poles have no right to talk about Russian-Ukrainian relations. But there are enough problems without confusing the issues.

Proceeding from here, I cannot agree with Solzhenitsyn that in 1920 the Poles started to " plunder and carve up Russia." As far as I am aware no Polish soldier ever set foot on Russian soil. If crimes were committed, then it was against the Lithuanians, Belorussians and Ukrainians, but not the Russians.

The destruction of the Orthodox Church on Sasky Square is a complex problem. I am, on principle, opposed to the destruction of churches. But for the population of Warsaw this church represented a symbol of tsarist power. Even taking this into account, I would in all probability have voted against destroying it, but—let us not delude ourselves—I would have been in a minority.

In comparison with the long list of mutual Polish-Russian crimes drawn up by Solzhenitsyn, it may appear that my treatment of the history of our relations is too flippant. No, I agree that it weighs heavily on the present and hangs like a thunder-cloud over the future. It has been made even heavier by the 34 years of communist " friendship " which is in itself sufficiently sickening for us to hate each other, as do people who live in the same communal flat.

But if I were asked which was the worst crime of the Poles *vis-à-vis* the Russians, I would not mention Sigismund III, nor Batory. The worst crime of the Poles *vis-à-vis* the Russians is contempt—stupid, shameful contempt, not, as some Russians think " aristocratic " contempt but the opposite, servile contempt.

It is of course more difficult to substantiate this than to prove that 300 years ago Polish troops occupied the Kremlin. But surely it is more important to talk about what is alive, and covered by pretence, than what has easily been proven many years ago.

When I think about the Russian side, I also think that feelings are more important than facts. The Russians' greatest crime *vis-à-vis* the Poles is a mixture of suspicion and hatred.

If I am accused of being a pessimist with regard to present and future Polish-Russian relations, I would reply: whosoever is truly concerned with the ideal of really good relations between the Russians and the Poles (and here I include myself) first should not delude himself and second, has a great deal of work to do.

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Poles, Russians and Czechoslovaks

Joint Statement by Charter 77 and KOR

August 1978

Ten years have passed since the troops of five Warsaw Pact countries occupied Czechoslovakia to suppress the aspirations of its people to freedom. A brake was put on the democratization process and on the hopes of all democratic Europe. In the name of humanistic values, the people of Czechoslovakia had developed an alternative to the totalitarian system. In the same year, the aspirations for freedom of the Polish intelligentsia were suppressed by force.

The 10 years that have passed have clearly proved the viability of the ideas of the Prague Spring and the democratic movement in Polish society—despite all that the spokespersons for the anti-democratic order and national non-sovereignty can say. Many people from both countries have, because of their support for these ideas, paid and still pay a very high price. They have been removed from public life, deprived of work and freedom and even sometimes of life. Continuing repression is part and parcel of the life of our friends in the USSR and other countries who fight and suffer for the same aims.

In the days around this 10th anniversary we are standing together in defending truth and freedom, in defending true human rights, democracy, social justice and national independence. We declare our common intention to maintain faith in these ideals and to act in the same spirit. Human dignity as an inviolate value which gives meaning to the lives of individuals and nations is the source of all our aspirations and actions. And it is from this source that our profound feelings of solidarity with our many friends in the world who cherish the same ideas spring.

The Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR"

Warsaw, 13 October 1978

On 1 October 1978, on the Polish–Czechoslovak Friendship Path in the Karkonosze Mountains, the third meeting of representatives of Charter 77 and the Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR" should have taken place. Czechoslovak and Polish security services detained of Charter 77: Jiri Nemec, Tomas Petrivy and Dr Jaroslav Sabata as well as members of the KSS—KOR: Jan Litynski, Adam Michnik and Piotr Naimski who were on their way to the meeting. Before 48 hours had expired everyone was released with the excep-

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tion of Dr Jaroslav Sabata. He has remained in prison and is accused of obstructing the police. Dr Sabata is a spokesman of Charter 77 and was a prominent participant in the Prague Spring. He was expelled from the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party for condemning the military intervention by the five member states of the Warsaw Pact in 1968 and he was later a political prisoner. Because of the pressure of international public opinion he was released in 1976.

Today we appeal again to all people of good will throughout the world to defend the spokesman of Charter 77; especially we appeal to all Poles abroad to participate in this action. The struggle for human rights in Czechoslovakia is a struggle for the democratic future of all our nations.

Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR"

Moscow–Warsaw, July 1979

We, Russians and Poles, united in our common struggle for human rights, address ourselves to our Czech and Slovak friends, Charter 77 signatories, illegally imprisoned by the authorities of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic. We appeal to all people of good will in Poland and throughout the world. We appeal to the governments and the people of all countries.

We believe that every person imprisoned and persecuted for speaking the truth and defending justice is already victorious by virtue of his sacrifice. We believe that the ideas for which Jarmila Belikova, Vaclav Benda, Otka Bednarzowa, Jiri Dientsbier, Vaclav Havel, Ladislav Lis, Jiri and Dana Nemec, Petr Uhl, Jaroslav Sabata and other defenders of human rights in Czechoslovakia, Russia and Poland are persecuted, will be victorious in the hearts and minds of Czechs and Slovaks, Poles and Russians; that those ideas will serve to bring our peoples closer—in spite of our governments' policies. We believe that through our work, our testimony and our sacrifice we will achieve—all of us together—the victory of truth and justice in the life of our societies.

We know that our friends, detained in Czechoslovakia at the end of May, will regain their freedom only through pressure from the public. We shall do our utmost to reduce the length of their stay in prison. We hope that all people of good will throughout the world will help us in this task.

(Signatures of all members of KSS–KOR.)

Members of the Moscow group for the monitoring of the Helsinki agreements: Victor Nekipielov, Tatiana Ossipowa, Malva Landa, Helena Bonner, Juri Jary Agejev, Naum Meiman, Sofia Kalistratova.

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Representative of the Assistance Fund for Political Prisoners: Irina Volkovskaya-Ginzburg.
Member of the Group for the Defence of the Rights of the Handicapped: Juri Kisielov.
Members of the Working Committee for the Study of the Abuse of Psychiatry: Leonard Ternovsky, Viacheslav Bakhmin, Andrei Sakharov, Tatiana Vielikanova, Grigori Vladimov, Alexander Laviet, Ivan Kovalov, Nina Komarova, Vladimir Malinkovitch, Maria Pietrienko, Irina Grivnina, Igor Khokhluvkin.

Hunger Strike

Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR" Warsaw, 22 August 1979

On 22 August 1979 the Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR" received the following letter:

An appeal to world public opinion. Since 25 May 1979 the following members of the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted in Czechoslovakia have been jailed: Otka Bednarova—journalist, Jarmila Belikova—psychologist, Vaclav Benda—philosopher and mathematician, Albert Cerny—actor, Jiri Dienstbier—journalist, Vaclav Havel—playwright, Ladislas Lis—lawyer, Vaclav Malec—Catholic priest, Dana Nemcova—psychologist, Jiri Nemec—psychologist, Peter Uhl—mechanical engineer. Others have been detained for a longer time: Jiri Lederer—journalist, Ales Machacek—agricultural engineer, Frantisek Hrabal—worker, Jiri Wolf—worker, Jan Zmatlik—sociologist, Jaroslav Sabata—psychologist. All of them are charged under paragraph 98 of the CSRS Penal Code: subversive activity against the state. The detained tried to act in the spirit of the Helsinki documents: they drew the attention of the public to cases of the violation of human rights, they took seriously the attempts to ease tension, they wanted to contribute with their lives to the cause of peace, human rights, freedom. They have been deprived of freedom so that the Czech human rights campaign, represented by Charter 77, could be stifled and the efforts of those who fight for human rights all over the world could be defeated.

. . . On 20 August 1979, 6 a.m., I will begin an eight-day long hunger strike together with the Polish campaigners for human rights, as an act of support for the human rights campaign all over the world, from Vietnam to Brazil. I would like to thank all the people who will sign the appeal for the release of political prisoners in Czechoslovakia and all who will join the hunger strike in solidarity with the persecuted. With faith in justice—Karel Carli Soukup.

Prague, 15 August 1979

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The author of this appeal, Karel Carli Soukup—a well known singer and signatory of Charter 77—together with David Nemec and one more Czech citizen whose name we do not know, was arrested on his way from Cracow to the place of the intended hunger strike. The Social Self-Defence Committee " KOR " expresses its solidarity with Karel Carli Soukup's appeal and announces that more than a dozen people immediately expressed their readiness to join in the hunger strike. We appeal to the Czech authorities to release the jailed campaigners for human rights in Czechoslovakia. Otherwise a solidarity hunger strike will begin in Poland.

Declaration by KOR and ROPCiO

We, the undersigned, in order to bear witness to our solidarity with our imprisoned Czech and Slovak brothers as well as with our friends in Polish jails, have begun today, 3 October 1979, a hunger strike in the Church of the Holy Cross in Warsaw.

We earnestly appeal to all people of good will in Poland and the rest of the world, to join us in defending the arrested members of the Czechoslovak Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted: Rudolf Battek, Otka Bednarova, Jarmila Belikova, Vaclav Benda, Albert Cerny, Jiri Dienstbier, Vaclav Havel, Dana Nemcova, Jiri Nemec, Ladislav Lis, Vaclav Maly and Peter Uhl;

—in defending priests arrested in Slovakia and the Czech lands for performing their pastoral duties: Ales Brezina, Josef Mrovcak, Josef Zverina and many others;

—in defending the Czechs and Slovaks arrested for participating in Pope John Paul II's pilgrimage to Poland;

—in defending all political prisoners in Czechoslovakia, among them: Frantisek Hrabal, Jiri Lederer, Jaroslav Sabata, Jaromir Havrda, Jiri Wolf, Jan Zmatlik, Ales Machacek and Tomas Petrivy, who is being held in a psychiatric hospital.

We ask you also to take a stand in defence of Adam Wojciechowski and Edmund Zadrozynski, who are under arrest in Poland. We believe that human solidarity is capable of effectively defending the rights and dignity of man.

We have chosen to carry out our hunger strike in a Catholic church since in the Polish People's Republic only the Church can give sanctuary to people of various persuasions, to people who act in defence of the inalienable rights of the human person.

We have asked Professor Jan Kielanowski and Dr Jan Jozef Lipski to act as our representatives.

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Jacek Bierezin, Andrzej Czuma, Kazimierz Janusz, Anka Kowalska, Jacek Kuron, Jan Litynski, Father Stanislaw Malkowski, Jerzy Markuszewski, Adam Michnik, Halina Mikolajska, Mariusz Wilk.

4 Oct. The hunger strikers were joined by Konrad Bielinski,
5 Oct. . . . by Antoni Macierewicz and Kazimierz Woycicki,
6 Oct. . . . by Joanna Dudek-Gwiazda from Gdansk (her husband Andrzej Gwiazda, member of the Committee of Free Trade Unions of the Baltic Coast, was not allowed to participate by a doctor).

On 7 October a hunger strike in solidarity with the Warsaw strikers began in the parish church at Zbrosza Duza (village known for its previous political activism in support of human rights), by Janusz Lorens from the village of Model and Jan Grob from Wola Sulawska.

On 7 October during the evening approximately 15,000 leaflets were distributed outside churches in Warsaw informing people of the aims of the hunger strike. The militia detained for 48 hours two members of the Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR"—Zbigniew Romaszewski and Henryk Wujec.

On 7 October the following people started the week-long hunger strike in a private flat in Prague as a gesture of solidarity with those in prisons in Czechoslovakia and in Poland and with those who are on hunger strike in the Warsaw church: Evzen Brikcius, David Menec, Pavla Nemcova, Marketa Nemcova, Josef Rychler, Pavel Szmida, Petruszka Szustrova.

On 8 October the following spokesmen of Charter 77 sent a telegram to the group striking in the Warsaw church: Vladislav Hejdanek, Jiri Hajek and Zdana Tominova.

Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR" Warsaw, 15 October 1979

From 3 to 10 October 1979 15 people: Konrad Bielinski, Jacek Bierezin, Andrzej Czuma, Joanna Duda-Gwiazda, Kazimierz Janusz, Anka Kowalska, Jacek Kuron, Jan Litynski, Antoni Macierewicz, Father Stanislaw Malkowski, Jerzy Markuszewski, Adam Michnik, Halina Mikolajska, Mariusz Wilk and Kazimierz Woycicki carried out a hunger strike in the Church of the Holy Cross in Warsaw in protest against the recent persecution of people fighting for freedom in Czechoslovakia and Poland. On 7 October and during the following days, the following people joined the hunger strike in Prague: Ewzen Brikcius, David Nemec, Pavla Nemcova, Marketa Nemcova, Josef Refler, Pavel Szmida and Petruszka Szustrova.

KSS–KOR believes that these actions will demonstrate to the nations and governments of Czechoslovakia and Poland that the viola-

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tion of human and civil rights always meets with unanimous counter-action from all people of good will.

Charter 77, Czechoslovakia
Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS), Czechoslovakia

Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR," Poland

18 October 1979

On 22 October 1979 the trial of Otka Bednarzowa, Vaclav Benda, Jiri Dienstbier, Vaclav Havel, Dana Nemcova and Peter Uhl, accused of subversive activity against the Czechoslovak Republic, is starting in Prague. The Government of the Czechoslovak Republic decided to take this action in spite of numerous public opinion protests all over the world and in spite of demands to free all those arrested for their beliefs. This action directed against those trying to preserve human rights is illegal. We believe that, irrespective of the court's decision in Prague, the trial of our friends constitutes their moral victory. We declare that we will continue our efforts to safeguard human dignity, in defence of all those persecuted in our countries.

Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR"
(signatures of all members)
for Charter 77 and VONS: Tominova, Hajek and Hejdanek.

Sakharov, Poles and Czechs

Cross-frontier Cooperation on Human Rights

Early in November 1979, a week after the trial in Prague of the Charter 77 signatories, a letter was received by members of the Charter 77 movement in Prague and also by the Social Self-Defence Committee "KOR" in Warsaw. The letter was a proposal by Andrei Sakharov and other leading members of the Moscow Helsinki Group "for more regular contacts and for the unification of our struggle for human rights in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. It would obviously be fitting to formulate a common statement of the human rights groups in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. . . ." The proposal was approved and accepted by the recipients. Dr Jiri Hajek, the former Foreign Minister, and Ladislav Hejdanek, the philosopher, replied to Dr Sakharov and his colleagues that "together with you, we consider it our struggle to defend the rights and dignity of man everywhere in the world." But shortly thereafter Sakharov was exiled to Gorki.

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The Banishment of Sakharov, January 1980

Dear Professor Sakharov,

We are extremely concerned to hear about your detention and banishment to the town of Gorki. We have always expressed solidarity with your unyielding struggle for human rights in the Soviet Union. For this struggle and your personal courage you have received the Nobel Peace Prize. Nothing works better for peace than efforts to ensure that human rights are respected in every country. For many people your stand is an inspiration to similar activities, though in other conditions and on a different scale. A voice like yours will always assure them that they fight for universal and inalienable human rights. Among them the right to freedom of conscience and expressions of convictions are of paramount importance. Please accept our highest regard for your actions and courage and for all those who in your country defend the dignity and rights of the individual.

Miroslawa Chamcowna—educator, Society for Academic Courses; Aleksander Glajchgewicht—physicist, Social Self-Defence Committee; Krzysztof Grzelcyk—student, Slawomir Najnikier—student, Students' Solidarity Committee; Adam Plesnar—lawyer, member of the Free Democratic Movement; Tadeusz Puczko—Polish philologist, Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights; Jan Waszkiewicz—mathematician, Social Self-Defence Committee; Tadeusz Zipsert—town planner, Society for Academic Courses.

Polish Human Rights Committee

Warsaw, 24 January 1980

Soviet aggression abroad has been followed by more intense political repression inside the USSR. The foremost figure of the democratic movement in the USSR, Professor Sakharov, has been deported with his wife from Moscow to Gorki. The persecution of Sakharov has been accompanied by increased persecution of Russian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian, Georgian, Tatar and other democratic activists who combine the defence of human rights with the struggle for freedom and independence. Soviet prisons and concentration camps are being filled by hundreds of thousands of prisoners of conscience. The exile of Sakharov, who is a spokesman for all democratic forces in the USSR, has as its aim his isolation from the libertarian milieux, the weakening of their strivings and the silencing of voices appealing to world public opinion. The Polish Human Rights Movement joins all those wherever they are who have indignantly denounced the persecution of Sakharov and other fighters for human rights in the USSR. We

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demand the cessation of persecution on political and national grounds of all victims of repression, including the Polish minority which is denied its national rights in the USSR.

For the Press Bureau of the Polish Human
Rights Committee, Edward Wladyslaw Staniewski

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The Happiest Barracks in the Camp

Political jokes in the communist countries have a cathartic function. They are both an expression of inner freedom and a substitute for freedom of expression. They are also the manifestation of the proverbial "wisdom of the people," reflecting their experience, their irony and their sorrows. They testify to the psychological authenticity of the motives which move the opposition.

Of all the communist capitals, Warsaw is probably the best breeding ground for political jokes. We reproduce below some recent examples from this unending stream of the sarcastic humour which is reflected in the non-American type of "Polish joke":

On workers:

Q. Why does the Polish working class refuse to work hard?
A. We know from history, comrade, that the ruling classes never work hard. . . .

On socialist medicine:

An overworked doctor in an overcrowded Warsaw hospital tells the sister in charge that he is in a hurry, so would she please give him the average temperature of all the patients in her ward. . . .

On socialist realist art:

An impressionist is a painter who paints as he feels
An expressionist is a painter who paints as he sees
An socialist realist is a painter who paints as he hears.

On Party secretaries:

The problem is that in the field of economics they are capable of nothing, while in politics they are capable of anything. . . .

On the intellectual qualities of the police:

A Western tourist approaches two patrolmen in a Warsaw street and asks them in English: "Where is the central railway station?" Getting no answer, the tourist tries the same question in French: "*Où est la gare centrale?*" but this produces an equally blank expression. "*Wo is der Bahnhof*?" repeats the persistent tourist, but the result is the same, so in desperation he attempts to elicit an answer by using the Italian language: "*Dove ce la stazione centrale della ferrovia?*" But to no avail. The tourist shrugs his shoulders and walks away.

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One of the policemen then turns to his mate: "Wouldn't it be a good idea to learn at least one foreign language?"

"Don't be so daft, Kowalski," says the other, "You just saw this foreign tourist and he knew four languages. Was it of any help to him?"

Two policemen are on the beat walking down a badly lit street. One of them suddenly sees in the light of his torch a severed human head lying in the gutter. He lifts it up to look at the face in the light of the solitary street lamp and exclaims: "Oh, my God! This is our Major Kowalski!"

"Don't be stupid," says the other. "Major Kowalski is not so tall . . .".

On the class struggle and socialist internationalism:

An applicant is being interviewed by the Personnel Officer of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"Your name?"

"Moshe Goldberg."

"Your education?"

"A Ph.D. from Oxford and a Diploma of the Ecole des Sciences Politiques in Paris."

"Foreign Languages?"

"English, French, German and Italian."

"O.K. We'll give you a job, but you must change your name."

"That's not on. I've already changed my name."

"How come? What was your name before?"

"Prince Radziwill."

On Church-State relations:

The church is full. Everybody is on their knees except one man who stands in silence near the entrance. Somebody asks him: "Why are you not kneeling?"

"I am an atheist."

"What are you doing in church then?"

"I am also against the communist regime."

On Polish-Soviet relations:

Party Secretary Gierek makes one final request before the Pope leaves for Rome: "Your Holiness, could you please arrange a divorce between Poland and the Soviet Union?"

"My son, of course I can. But I am afraid you will have to pay alimony."

When a Polish cosmonaut was rocketed into orbit with a Soviet spaceman one Pole asked another:

"What did the flight prove?"

"That a Pole can get loose from earth, but not from the Soviet Union."

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Notes on Contributors and Authors

STANISLAW BARANCZAK was born in 1946. He is a poet, essayist, translator, specialist in the theory of literature and co-editor of *Zapis*. In 1978 he was dismissed from his academic post at Poznan University. He has been offered the chair of Polish literature at Harvard University but has so far been refused an exit visa from Poland.

JACEK BOCHENSKI, born 1926, is a prose writer, essayist and translator of the classics. Since 1976 he has been barred from publishing and from holding academic posts.

KRYSTYNA BRONKOWSKA (pseudonym) translates from Polish, mainly plays and political commentaries, and writes on the theatre, both Polish and English.

BOHDAN CYWINSKI is a historian, writer and journalist, and editor of the Catholic monthly, *Znak*. He is the author of the best-selling book about the prominent Polish politicians at the turn of the century, *Rodowody niepokornych* ("Genealogies of the Unbowed," Warsaw, 1971).

STEFAN KISIELEWSKI, born 1911, is a novelist, publicist, composer and regular columnist in the Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny*. Renowned for his outspokenness, his articles are subjected to heavy censorship. He also publishes books and articles in the uncensored press and abroad.

RYSZARD KOWALSKI is the pseudonym of a leading Polish writer.

MARCIN KROL, born 1944, is a political scientist, historian, journalist and translator. He is co-author of *Sylwetki polityczne XIX wieku* ("Political Profiles of the Nineteenth Century," Warsaw, 1974) and author of *Style politycznego myslenia* ("Forms of Political Thought," Paris, 1979). He is now barred from publishing in Poland.

JOZEF KUSMIEREK is a Warsaw journalist who specializes in economic affairs. He has an outstanding reputation as an investigative reporter.

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and of the independent publishing enterprise, NOWA. He is the author of *Kosciol-Lewica-Dialog* (Paris, 1978), available in French as *L'Eglise et la Gauche—Le Dialogue Polonais* (Ed. Seuil, Paris, 1979).

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MACIEJ POLESKI is the pen-name of a Polish journalist.

BOLESLAW SULIK is a script writer, film maker and critic based in London. He has worked in Poland many times, notably on Andrzej Wajda's *The Shadow Line* (1975), and has researched and co-written two drama documentaries shown on British television, *Three Days in Szczecin* (1976) and *Stalin the Red Tsar* (1978).

JAN SZCZEPANSKI, born 1913, is a Member of the Council of State. He is head of the Department of Social Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences (of which he is the Deputy Chairman) and a former President of the International Sociological Association. His books include *Polish Society* (1970, in English), "Society and Intelligentsia" (1957, in Polish) and "Reflections on the Republic" (1972, in Polish).

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The editor would like to express his thanks to ANDREW STYPULKOWSKI for his help in the preparation of these two special issues of *Survey* on Poland.

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'Socialist revolutions put an end to bourgeois censorship'

Soviet Historical Encyclopædia's entry on censorship.

Index on Censorship no. 4/1980, published in July, is devoted to examining censorship and its effects on the arts, sciences, academic research and literature in the Soviet Union today.

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SCIENCE IN BLINKERS: *Mark Popovsky*, author of 'Science in Chains', describes the absurd paranoia and its effects which the dissemination of scientific knowledge excites among the Soviet authorities.

THEATRE CENSORSHIP: *Anna Tamarchenko* says theatre censorship during the Brezhnev period has been 'slippery, hypocritical and lawless'; however, she notes that new 'experimental' theatres and new playwrights keep appearing.

SAMIZDAT AND THE REBIRTH OF LITERATURE: *Andrei Sinyavsky*, in an interview with the editor of *Index*, reviews 50 years of Soviet literary censorship.

THE NON-RUSSIANS: ALIVE, IF NOT WELL: *Bohdan Nahaylo* reminds us that the majority of political prisoners in the USSR are non-Russians and that the demands of the national minorities for rights and political independence are growing in the Soviet Union.

CAN THE DISSIDENTS SURVIVE?: *Peter Reddaway* gives an account of the recent purge of dissidents during the pre-Olympic clean-up and presents some thoughts on their future.

LITHUANIA'S UNOFFICIAL PRESS: *Marite Sapiets* describes the development of and motivation behind the currently circulating samizdat journals in Lithuania of which there are at least 10—a remarkable output for a population of just 3 million.

CHRISTIAN SAMIZDAT: *Philip Walters* examines the main themes of recent Christian samizdat and assesses the challenge it is presenting to the Soviet regime.

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ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: A unique catalogue of Soviet samizdat periodicals which have appeared during the last four years. Compiled by *Peter Reddaway.*

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